

# LUTHERAN WOMAN TODAY

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PEACE  
and JUSTICE

## Cover meditation ♦♦

To the boy from East Germany who drew the art on the front cover, "peace with justice" is more than a phrase—it is a deep hope. Because my mother and father came to the United States from Czechoslovakia as young adults seeking freedom, and because my grandparents and other relatives still live in Czechoslovakia with little freedom, I too hope for peace and justice.

In Isaiah 2:4 it says, "and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks." The cover artist might add: "And tanks will turn into watering cans."

Dear Lord,

You created us all equal, yet it seems that in our world, some people are more equal than others, because of their race, nationality or color.

Please help us resolve these differences. As long as this problem continues, there will never be peace.

Help the unfairly treated as they struggle through hard times.

Let justice go over all the world to help those unjustly punished or imprisoned. Amen

—Andrea Polacek, age 12  
Park Ridge, Illinois

**ON THE COVER:** Art by Stephan Zacher, age 11, East Germany, "World Council of Churches 'Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation' Wall Calendar," World Council of Churches, Geneva, Switzerland. Used by permission.

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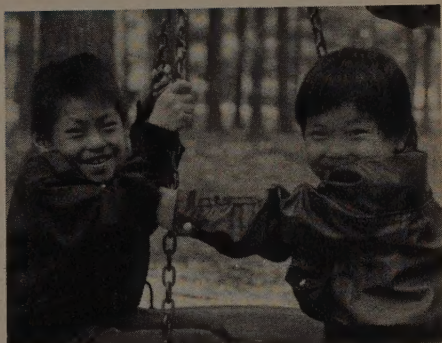
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Lift ev'ry voice and sing

# Songs of Freedom, Voices for Justice

Gwendolyn S. King

They marched with candles, flickering lights of remembrance, in honor of the man called Martin Luther King Jr. A man of peace, a man of justice, a man of faith, a man for freedom. They marched, like those before them, to reaffirm their own visions and dreams, African-Americans and European-Americans, women and men, Christians, Muslims and Jews, foreign nationals and Native Americans, Latinos and Asian-Americans, administrators, faculty and students.

They marched toward the Dartmouth College green, the site where just four years before, shanties—symbols of apartheid—were built in protest of the college's investment policies that supported injustices in South Africa. These structures of wood and tin stood proudly amidst the ivied towers on a field of white. The shanties were named for voices of freedom and justice crying in the wilderness: Stephen Biko, Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu.

Now, four years later, as the cold north winds blew over the Hanover, New Hampshire, plain, the marchers arrived once again at the center of the green to recognize their connectedness to one another, to those who had struggled before them and those

of their silence, one rich alto  
voice rose in song:

"We shall overcome, We shall overcome"

and a grand chorus resounded,

"Deep in my heart, I do believe,  
that we shall overcome someday."

who continue to struggle. Out of their silence, one rich alto voice rose in song: "We shall overcome, We shall overcome"—the song that has become the anthem of struggles for justice and freedom.

The lone voice was joined by another, and then another, until all were singing, hands

linked, and a grand chorus resounded, "Deep in my heart, believe, That we shall overcome someday."

Songs of freedom have been sung throughout the ages by peoples in their struggles for freedom and justice. The African American religious tradition is rich with such songs. "Didn't Lord Deliver Daniel," "O Freedom," "Walk Together Children," "We've Come This Far by Faith," and "Lift Every Voice and Sing" often called the Black national anthem (see text, p. 6), to name a few.

Freedom songs have offered strength in times of weakness, courage in times of fear, hope in times of despair, and joy in times of victory. People sang in Tiananmen Square as the tanks rolled in. They sang in the Soviet Union when president Mikhail Gorbachev announced his policy of *glasnost*. They sang in Czechoslovakia, as democracy was heralded and Vaclav Havel, a playwright, was made president. They sang in Berlin as the wall separated East from West came tumbling down.

They also sing in South Africa. Black South Africans and their allies have been singing even in the midst of their oppression. They sang in the homelands as the Pass Laws separated husbands from wives and children. They sang in Soweto when 1000 children were killed between 1976 and 1978. For 27 years

they sang for the release of Nelson Mandela, their leader. They sang upon his release.

As Mandela crossed the threshold of Victor Verster Prison, hand in hand with his beloved wife, Winnie—a leader in her own right—he raised his right arm, fist clenched, stretched it toward the people, evoking the call of South African freedom—*Amandla* ("power") and its response *Azizwe* ("to the people"). Nelson Mandela has been freed from prison, but neither he nor his

**Freedom songs have offered strength in times of weakness, courage in times of fear, hope in times of despair, and joy in times of victory.**

"Deep in my heart,

people are yet free from the oppressive system of apartheid. So we continue to sing.

The United States also has its tradition of freedom songs, that proclaim this to be a "sweet land of liberty" whose borders freedom ring "from every mountain side." "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" calls us to remember that "as he died to make us holy, let us die to make men free." On the Fourth of July we celebrate our independence from England. We have come to see of ourselves as "one nation, under God, indivisible, with

justice for all."

perhaps we need to consider what that freedom really meant in those early days of the country. We might ask, "Were the first Americans free? Were the Native Americans who had been driven from their land, stripped of their land, and enslaved, were not counted as citizens; and even though citizens, were not entitled to vote. Was this

If we truly believe in freedom,  
and sing for it, then the walls  
of oppression and isolation,  
like the walls of Jericho, will  
come tumbling down.

"We shall overcome."

At what price was this so-called freedom obtained? At what expense? In the 20th century, other citizens suffered a similar fate: Japanese-Americans were incarcerated during World War II; currently, the debate over the citizenship and immigration status of Hispanic people rages on. How free are we now? And where is justice? Together "we have come over a path that with tears has been watered; we have come, treading a path through the blood of the slaughtered" ("Lift Every Voice and Sing," LBW 562).

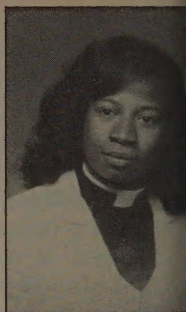
Freedom is a process. As the song affirms, "Ain't gonna let nobody turn me around. I'm gonna keep on walking, keep on singing. Walking toward freedom land." Until we eradicate injustice, freedom will continue to elude us and peace will not exist. We will not be free until we have won the battle against alcohol and drugs—which are claiming thousands of lives: of young and old of every skin color, race, or economic status. We will not be free until we have joined together to fight the deadly AIDS virus which respects no age, sexual orientation, race, religion or gender. We will not be free while the number of homeless and hungry in our country grows by leaps and bounds, with more children, men and families added to their ranks daily. We will not be free until we recognize our connectedness to one another and all creation, until we begin to take care of our resources and our planet.

The fullest and truest testimony of freedom has not yet been given. Martin Luther King Jr. said in his 1963 "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. . . . Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." For us, on every continent in the world, voices for justice are rising up songs of freedom.

In our struggle, let us not forget to sing. For singing reveals our courage, strength and hope. The power is in each of us—our hearts and our hands—to make a change. If we truly believe in freedom, and sing for it, the walls of oppression and isolation, like

the walls of Jericho, will come tumbling down. So, sing with me, and the sisters of the African-American group Sweet Honey in the Rock: "We who believe in freedom cannot rest. We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes." ■

*The Rev. Gwendolyn S. King is Christian chaplain at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, and also serves as a reserve chaplain in the United States Air Force. Pastor King is a member of the New England Synod's Commission for Multicultural Ministry.*



## Lift Every Voice and Sing

Till earth and heaven ring

Lift ev'ry voice and sing  
Till earth and heaven  
ring,  
Ring with the harmonies of liberty.  
Let our rejoicing rise  
High as the list'ning skies;  
Let it resound loud as the rolling  
sea.

Sing a song full of the faith that the  
dark past has taught us;  
Sing a song full of the hope that the  
present has brought us;  
Facing the rising sun  
Of our new day begun,  
Let us march on, till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,  
Bitter the chast'ning rod,  
Felt in the days when hope unborn  
had died;  
Yet, with a steady beat,  
Have not our weary feet  
Come to the place for which our  
parents sighed?

We have come over a way that with  
tears has been watered;  
We have come, treading our path

through the blood of the  
slaughtered,  
Out from the gloomy past,  
Till now we stand at last  
Where the white gleam of our  
bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,  
God of our silent tears,  
Thou who hast brought us thus  
on the way;  
Thou who hast by thy might  
Led us into the light:  
Keep us forever in the path, we  
pray.

Lest our feet stray from the  
places, our God, where we met  
thee;  
Lest, our hearts drunk with the  
wine of the world, we forget thee  
Shadowed beneath thy hand  
May we forever stand,  
True to our God, true to our nat  
land. ■

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# Airport Encounter

Lynne Puttmann Santangelo

He had been waiting at the airport since 6:00 for a plane due at 9:10. At nine the public address system buzzed and crackled, announcing a five-minute delay. The tense, middle-aged man turned to me for clarification. For the past year and a half he had been looking to me to explain, to make inquiries, to find some way to hurry the arrival of the moment when the man just learned was once again home.

Jou Toua had been separated from his young son Chang in a hurried escape from Laos four years ago. His wife was only one and a half years younger than he. He was in the fields with his uncle when soldiers approached their family home. To wait for them to leave would have meant great danger for them all. Circling back to pick them up before leaving for Thailand was impossible. The Mekong River separated the child from his mother, stepmother, brothers and father. They eventually heard that he was safe and would be brought out of Laos as soon as possible—they were told to go ahead and prepare for resettlement.

The family arrived in central Wisconsin and began their new life. They struggled with English, learned basic survival skills and started to begin their future. Jou Toua's back

problems limited his employment prospects and kept him going from doctor to doctor. His depression worried his caseworker and English teacher. Then came the news that little Chang had escaped Laos with his uncle's family. Piles of paperwork, phone calls, cables and long delays followed. "Please tell them to hurry!" Jou Toua pleaded. "I need to have my son here!"

Finally Chang's arrival date was announced . . . and then postponed for five long days. Jou Toua and his wife came to the office one last time to plan for Chang's first weeks in the United States. "He won't be able to remember you," we warned. "It's been a long time and he's almost six now. He'll be frightened and maybe even angry about now being separated from his uncle. . . ." Jou Toua and his wife responded with tearful nods.

I was surprised that Jou Toua chose to come alone to the airport. Among family reunions are usually boisterous occasions. A crowd of 50 people waited for a widow and four children who were to be on the same flight. The plane landed and we all moved toward the door. In the unbearable suspense that followed, one American after another came through the doorway. "Don't worry," I told him, "families with small chil-

dren always get off last." I tried not to think of the times when families had missed connections and had been stranded for hours in the Minneapolis or Chicago airport.

"They're on the plane! Six of them, right?" one passenger thoughtfully announced when he saw so many dark-haired people with worried expressions. We all laughed with relief.

Suddenly they were walking toward us; and before I had time to think, "How will he know which little boy?" Jou Toua was on his knees before the child—holding him gently by the shoulders, talking to him in a low voice. He tenderly helped him zip and snap the stiff new jeans Chang had been given on the West Coast but hadn't learned how to fasten yet. He removed the little shoulder bag that seemed to be all the luggage Chang had brought and zipped his hooded sweatshirt against the chilly night. He hesitantly backed off a few feet to snap a picture, hands shaking, tears pouring down his cheeks.

Chang stood silent, unblinking, waiting. I looked away from his face for the first time and noticed his



stockinged feet. He had made way through the snow on the way without shoes! I motioned to Toua and we soon discovered shoes in the shoulder bag. We began to work a tired, damp foot into a stiff leather shoe.

It seemed a dream that I actually was touching this bony little boy after so many long months. I became dimly aware of a growing silence in the airport. Jou Toua and I looked to see all the Hmong in the room, watching quietly from a respectful distance, sensing the specialness, the near holiness—of this moment.

The widow spoke and someone translated. "He's a good boy. He didn't cry. He kept on saying, 'I don't know what my father's face looks like. I don't know where he is. I know he will find me.'" Many eyes blurred with tears. The crowd began to move slowly toward the door, to wait for cars and home.

That night at the airport was one of those special experiences that refine and sanctify life. Jou Toua gave me a glimpse of God's Father—longing, waiting, striving tirelessly toward reunion with a child. Little Chang's words provided the perfect narration for our waiting faith. We move through life confident that one day we will come face to face with our Father, and that he will recognize us.

As we walked to our cars that

**I** looked up to see all the Hmong in the room watching quietly from a respectful distance, sensing the specialness—the near holiness—of this moment

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s, forgetting their own refugee  
l immigrant origins, get angry—



**W**hen we place costs and difficulties on one side of the scale and Jou Toua, Chang and the Word of God on the other, there is no question which way the balance will tip.

they call us. I am aware of costs and difficulties.

But when we place such concerns on one side of the scale and Jou Toua, Chang and the Word of God on the other, there is no question in my mind which way the balance will tip. ■

*In her work with Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, Lynne Santangelo helps resettle refugees and other new arrivals to the area, working cooperatively with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services.*



# Dominion

## Over the Earth

Robin McCullough

"God said to them [male and female], 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth' " (Genesis 1:28 RSV).

God granted human beings dominion over the earth. But today the earth cries out in distress. Human beings have confused *dominion over the earth* with unrestrained *domination of it*. Just what should it mean, then, to be given dominion over creation?

**First**, any understanding of dominion must be based on Genesis 1, and the subject of Genesis 1 is God. God creates. God takes chaos and brings order out of it. God has ultimate authority. It is God who grants dominion to human beings.

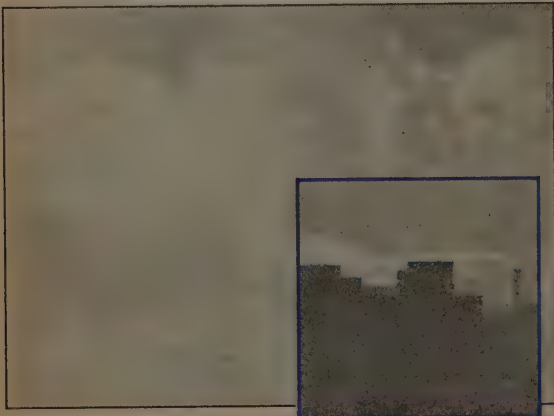
It follows, then, that the only way

to understand dominion is in terms of God. When we look to see how God exercises dominion over creation, we see that God does not deal with uncreated matter in conquering, destructive ways. In the same way, human dominion was not meant to give permission to beat down or overpower. That is not God's model of dominion over creation.

Human beings were never intended to subdue the earth to satisfy the self-interest, greed, or personal whim. Dominion is not isolated from God; nor does it disregard God's intention for creation. God's intention is that we assure that creation comes to fruition. We care for the well-being of the entire creation.

**Second**, at the same time that human beings are given dominion, are gifted with skills for mastery, we are also woven into the web of life. Connected to all other creatures in a complex natural system, we cannot escape the interdependence embedded in creation. Eventually, our every abuse of creation will come back to haunt us.

*What should it mean to be given dominion over creation?*





*Trashing our world with toxic wastes, excessive garbage and pollutants shows that we have forgotten whose world it is.*

God created a beautiful and intricate world. We stand in awe of its complexity and its simplicity. Life is a precious gift. At no point do we own and control resources for our self-interest, without regard for the rest of creation.

Whether we are in a laboratory, classroom, home, office or farmyard, we are in relation to other parts of creation. We deal with a world created and claimed by God.

*Third*, we can learn about dominion from the example of Jesus. Jesus came with authority over creation, but he modeled a life of servanthood. Even during his temptation in the desert, Jesus chose not to misuse creation but instead relied on God's power to best the forces of evil. Consequently, our dominion over creation is to be a dominion of servanthood. We are to act as servants on behalf of the Creator.

Actually, disregard for creation reveals a deeper wound. Trashing our world with toxic wastes, excessive garbage and pollutants shows that we have forgotten whose world it is. We often act as if God did not create this world and proclaim it good. We act as if we no longer know who we are—people of God entrusted with the care of a world created by God.

Christ came in love. With love, dominion can no longer be a power play that disregards others. To care for the other, be it earth or neighbor, we must make an intentional effort to see beyond our self-interest. We are called to exercise dominion so that creation might be blessed, just as Abraham and Sarah were called so that the nations of the earth might be blessed.

O God, you gave us dominion over creation. Yet, the air and waters are polluted, and toxic wastes have nowhere to hide. Open our eyes to what you had in mind when you first bid us to have dominion over your creation. Empower us with the will to live interdependently with all your creation. And show us how to be a blessing for your world. Amen. ■

*The Rev. Robin McCullough, pastor of St. John Lutheran Church, Canal Fulton, Ohio, directed an environmental education program at a Lutheran camp. She enjoys camping, hiking and storytelling.*



# In the Child's Best Interest

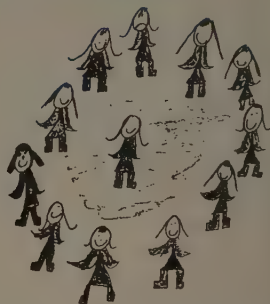
While Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America celebrate God's creation at and after their First Triennial Convention, another kind of "convention" is gaining audience and support for its cause, namely the children of the world.

This *convention*—another way of saying "treaty" or "legal document"—is known as the "United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child," and its ambitious and vital task is to garner broad political commitment for the protection of children around the world. Today more than ever, protection is exactly what children need when thousands upon thousands of youngsters in the world are affected by abuse, war, homelessness, drugs, discrimination or family disintegration.

But this U.N. convention is not just another cataloging of the world's ills about which the average person can do little. To the contrary, it is a concrete sign of hope and concerted action by the countries of the world to act on behalf of children and in their best interest. For Women of the ELCA (who in their July convention are speaking and acting mightily to support families, family life, and women and children in poverty), the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child is a ripe opportunity for ministry.

While children are, for the most part, to be afforded the same basic rights as adults, their physical and mental immaturity makes them especially vulnerable, so that they require special rights to protect them and meet their unique needs. The convention lifts up four basic areas of rights:

- 1 The right to survival (adequate food, shelter, clean water and primary health care), which includes the right to a name and nationality.
- 2 The right to develop (through education and play; through access to the social, economic and political life of their respective cultures) in an environment free from all forms of discrimination.
- 3 The right to protection—from all kinds of exploi-



Anette—Denmark

**The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child lifts up four basic areas of children's rights:**

- the right to survive;
- the right to develop;
- the right to protection;
- and the right to participate in decisions that affect their well-being.

ion, abuse and neglect—and the right to special protection in times of war.

The right to participate in decisions that affect their well-being, including access to information about rights they possess as children.

The convention builds on a history of interest in children's rights dating back to the League of Nations and the 1959 United Nations *Declaration of Rights of the Child*. It gained momentum in 1979 during the U.N. International Year of the Child, prompted by a proposal by Poland in 1978. Ten years after the making, the convention passed by consensus of the 159 U.N. member nations at its General Assembly in November 1989, despite some controversy about a few articles.

The convention now awaits ratification by individual countries. As soon as 20 nations ratify it, it becomes international law, with some teeth in it to enforce compliance by countries.

For children this is the Magna Carta," notes Frances P. Grant, executive director of UNICEF, who sees the higher standards of the convention as an exciting trend.

Still the road to ratification may not be a smooth or swift one, especially in the United States, which has an all-too-modest track record for ratifying human rights conventions, having approved in recent years only the Convention Against Genocide. Though undoubtedly there are many reasons for halting U.S. action, one is the long path a U.N. convention must take through numerous U.S. government channels until it reaches the Senate.

Jesus said, "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me" (Matthew 18:5). What can we—readers of Lutheran Woman Today, participants of Women of the ELCA, and other concerned Christians—do? We can do much, and the opportunities are legion.

Of course we are called to contact appropriate federal legislators to let them know how vital we think ratification of the convention is. As we responded from LWT's call to ban the Styrofoam cup, women joining voice in a cause of faith can create a powerful instrument for change.

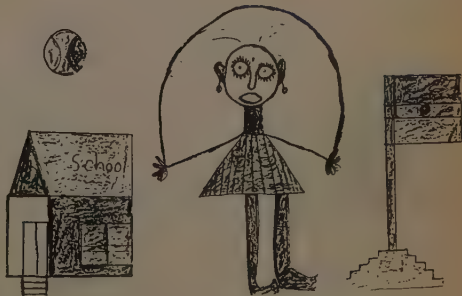
To coordinate efforts for U.S. ratification of the convention, a Washington-based working group has been es-



Marisa—Chile

## Name and Nationality

## Education



Adeline—India

tablished under the auspices of InterAction. InterAction is an association of private voluntary organizations engaged in humanitarian efforts. The ELCA's Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs in Washington, D.C. is cooperating with the working group. For an update on the legislative situation concerning the convention, contact the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs, 122 C. St. N.W., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20001-2172; phone (202) 783-7507.

As we make our thoughts known, we need to be continually learning about, discussing, interpreting, and advocating for the convention. *In the Child's Best Interest: A Primer on the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child* by Kay Castelle, from which the children's artwork on these pages is taken, is an excellent starting place. This 46-page paperback contains a brief introduction to and background on the convention, over 25 black-and-white selections of children's art linked to convention provisions, as well as the full text of the convention and a summary of articles of the convention. It is available for \$5.95, plus \$2.00 for postage and handling, from Defense for Children International-USA, 210 Forsyth St., New York, NY 10002, phone (212) 353-0951. Prices for bulk orders available. A teacher's guide for the primer containing lesson plans and classroom activities for junior high school students will be available from DCI later this year (check on price). Also available for \$2.00, for those wishing to support the convention, is an information kit containing a newsletter and ideas for adults and children.

The primer can be used as a basis for discussion and action activities in Sunday schools (both for adults and for children). Consider providing art opportunities for children to learn of the convention and what it means for them, or working with community religious and school leaders to form children's rights organizations.

The convention primer will be used as a major resource supporting the Mission90 emphasis "Justice, Peace and Creation: Our Children at Risk." Women of the ELCA and other congregational leaders may wish to plan joint programming for the parish using the primer as a resource. ■

—Nancy J. Stelling, from information provided by the Lutheran Office for World Community, New York, N.Y., and the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs, Washington, D. C.

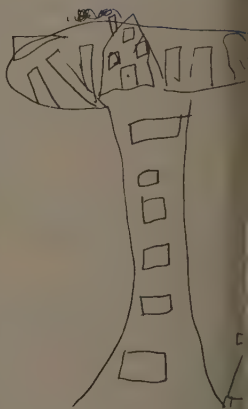


Olive—Greenland

## Rehabilitative Care

## Protection of Privacy

Sonia—United States



Artwork reprinted from *In the Child's Best Interest: A Primer on the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child* by Kay Castelle, copyright 1989. Used by permission.

# The Church in Society: *Social Statements*

Karen L. Bloomquist

"What's the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's position on . . . ?" Curious Lutherans, and others, want to know. The official "answers" to questions about social issues often come in the form of *social statements*. Social statements:

- ◆ are theological documents that consider social issues in the light of God's Word;
- ◆ are teaching papers to help inform, guide and challenge the church and its members;
- ◆ are ethical guides on complex issues;
- ◆ are official position statements of the ELCA, adopted by a churchwide assembly, and a guide to the ELCA's advocacy work.

## *Not an Overnight Task*

Developing, writing, discussing and adopting a social statement is a process that typically takes three years or longer. The Commission for Church in Society researches, consults and works in-depth with an appointed task force to consider varied viewpoints and encourage review and response by congregations and individuals. (For more information, "Social Statements in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: Policies and Procedures." (Single copy may be requested by calling the ELCA Resource Information Service, or RIS, 800-638-3522.)

## *Five "In Process"*

The first draft of what is expected to become the ELCA's first social statement, "The Church in Society: Toward a Lutheran Perspective," is currently available (\$.50 each; contact the ELCA Distribution Center, 800-328-4648.)

Study drafts of four other social

statements are being developed. First drafts of social statements on abortion and on the death penalty will be available for discussion this fall. It is hoped that these social statements will be considered and adopted at the 1991 churchwide assembly.

Discussions on human sexuality and on environmental issues have also begun, anticipating consideration at the 1993 churchwide assembly.

## ◆ *Participation Welcome*

Congregations and Women of the ELCA units are urged to discuss "The Church in Society: Toward a Lutheran Perspective," and other study drafts, in forums, discussion groups or circles. Contact the Department of Studies, Commission for Church and Society, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631. ■

*Karen L. Bloomquist is director for studies, Commission for Church in Society.*

# Journey to the Holy Land

Fran Burnford

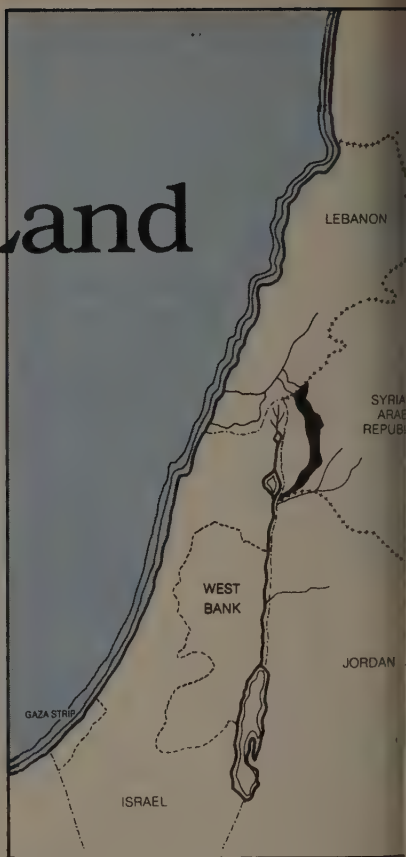
Each year hundreds of Lutheran women, men and children travel to the Holy Land, often as part of a Holy Land tour. The main purpose of many such tours is to help participants become acquainted with the history of the land where Jesus spent his earthly life and with the people who live there now.

Often these events ask participants to read some biblical, historical and theological material before they travel. The result is that many return from their travels reporting a greater understanding of the New Testament and the Middle East.

## What I learned

In January last year I was a member of a small group that traveled to the Holy Land, and I came back with some insights which help me better understand the land and the people there. We spent several weeks in Israel and the "Occupied Territories" (so called by many because since the 1967 six-day Arab-Israeli war, Israel has been occupying the West Bank and Gaza Strip). We were sponsored by Lutheran World Federation, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Division for Global Mission and the Commission for Church in Society.

While there we met people from the Israeli Foreign Ministry office,



from Jewish peace groups (such as Women in Black, SHANI, and Yehuda Gevul), and from the United Nations. We also visited the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial, Lutheran churches, Lutheran schools, and United Nations programs.

But what I remember most vividly from the trip was our time in several refugee camps on the West Bank and in Gaza. At the camps we visited refugee families, field hospitals, and U.N. schools. A highlight for me was meeting with women from several women's societies that provide a whole range of services to refugees displaced by the ongoing struggle, including orphaned children. From



**Palestinian refugee women in Beach camp (population 44,000) in the Gaza Strip. There are eight Palestine refugee camps in the Gaza Strip with a total population of 650,000.**

women's societies we learned life is like for women there and profound effect that the renewed Palestinian press for self-determination has had on them. This Palestinian movement, called *intifada*, is of a long-standing desire for a homeland and in reaction to untold suffering due to increasing human rights abuses. *Intifada*, often translated as "uprising," literally means "a shaking off." While Palestinian men and boys by the thousands are detained, imprisoned and expelled from the country, Palestinian women and girls, who so far are less susceptible to arrest—though not wholly immune—are sustaining life under occupation and supporting the *intifada*. Women already skilled in health

care, education and other social services from their years as volunteers in women's charitable societies are keeping seriously hampered programs alive and flexible enough to meet specific needs.

Other women, trained in community organization, are moving into leadership positions in their West Bank and Gaza communities now that fewer men are available to fill these roles. Still other women, affiliated or unaffiliated with the women's charitable societies, are working behind the scenes through neighborhood "popular committees" to teach children during the terms when schools are closed (which is most of the time).

Women are also braving the

**Since 1987 frequent curfews and commercial strikes have severely disrupted life in the Gaza Strip and West Bank areas. People must hurry to purchase food supplies when the markets reopen.**



streets alongside their sons and brothers to show support for the cause, intervening whenever possible to protect the victims of beatings, arrests and other forms of harassment by occupying Israeli soldiers. Often long curfews are imposed, confining whole families to their homes, making daily tasks a challenge. And, of course, women often are the ones weeping for loved ones martyred in the struggle.

Although the intifada has clearly united Palestinian women, it has also evoked sympathetic response from a number of Jewish women who, in groups like Women in Black, Israeli Women Against the Occupation, and Peace Now, have supported the Palestinian aims for self-determination and a just peace for all people in the Middle East. These courageous Jewish women give material aid to refugees, and their sensitive, sympathetic actions should not be overlooked.

### What you can do

You can make your own contribution as Christians to the lives of the many peoples caught in the complex situation in the Holy Land. First, you can seek to study about the struggles there, learning more about the legitimate claims of both the Israelis and Palestinians. In the process you'll learn, or relearn, some of the history and challenges of the people in this land that three faiths call holy. You'll also grasp the immense need for peace with justice there—for all peoples—and the role the Christian church plays in the process. ■

*Dr. Fran Burnford, Park Ridge, Illinois, is associate executive director of the ELCA Commission for Church in Society.*

## For further study

*Two Peoples . . . The Same Land*, Carl J. Birkland, editor (Augsburg, 1987) study book, code 15-62307, \$2.05; leader guide, code 15-62308, \$1.50).

"The Israeli/Palestinian Conflict . . . Message" (4-page pamphlet/bulletin insert) approved by the ELCA Church Council and a helpful adjunct to a study. (For a single copy call the Department of Studies, ELCA Commission for Church in Society at 312-382-2715. For multiple copies, call the ELCA Distribution Service, 800-328-4648, and order code number 67-1111. There is a charge for postage and handling.)

"Land of Fear, Land of Hope" parts I and II, *MOSAIC* (the ELCA's vision magazine) November 1988 (code 66-6690) and January 1989 (69-6690) back issues available for \$8.50 each. (Contact ELCA Distribution Service for the toll-free number above.)

*A Time for Speaking, A Time for Peace* a new videotape with study guide that explores the human side of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, peace and justice issues, and the church's role. While a comprehensive piece on the struggle, this resource looks, in part, at reasons for the intifada. Available for free loan from synod offices and resource centers or for rental (\$7.50) from Augsburg Publishers (code 36-88951-9050).

Study tours of the Holy Land are offered by: *Augsburg College Center for Global Education*, 731 21st Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55454; *Fellowship of Reconciliation*, 523 N. Broadway, Nyack, NY 10960; and *Pax World Foundation*, 348 East 10th Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103, among others.

# Disarmament

Mary Paulson Ruedisili

**member** as a young teenager ing for the people of the Soviet n, and for peace. Those were the of the cold war, when a large air base was being built nearby nuclear missiles were installed erground. I remember walking e with my friends in the cold, ching snow talking about hav- o retreat to bomb shelters. ast November our house was the of an impromptu "Breaking of Berlin Wall" party. As we hed the reports on the TV news saw people dancing on the wall, rejoiced that freedom was coming astern Europe. It wasn't until e that I realized I was witnessing nswer to my prayers of so many s ago.

**We still have** nuclear weapons e on the beautiful North Dakota ries, here where my mother, er and grandparents have care- y tended the soil for almost 100 rs. And even though throughout world there are enough nuclear pons to destroy humanity many es over, the U.S. government is r considering a whole new system nuclear arms.

he proposed rail-based MX mis- system will put missiles on rail- d tracks during a national emer- cy. Its proponents claim it is a less urable system, but to those who ose it, it seems *more* vulnerable l dangerous to have nuclear pons traveling over the nation's

railroads. That is why I decided I couldn't keep quiet when, in 1988, the air force held environmental impact hearings on its new system.

It became evident from newspaper and TV stories that business and political leaders seemed to expect everyone to support the deployment, primarily because it would bring badly needed jobs to our area. The only opposition would come from "outside agitators," it was said. Our local peace group knew that wasn't the case, and several people made plans to testify against the MX. After prayerful consideration I spoke out as well.

At the time of this writing, no final vote on the rail-based MX system has been taken in Congress. Since ultimately Congress approves, or denies, proposals for military spending, an effective method to encourage disarmament is to write letters expressing opinions to members of Congress. They can be reached at:

**Senator** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Senate Office Building**  
**Washington, DC 20510**

**Representative** \_\_\_\_\_  
**House Office Building**  
**Washington, DC 20515 ■**

*Mary Ruedisili, born in Powers Lake, North Dakota, now lives in Minot. She is active in the North Central North Dakota Peace Network and a member of the synod's Church in Society board.*

# 7 Companions of One Cloth

Study Text: Acts 9:36-42; 16:9-15, 40

Phyllis N. Kersten and E. Louise Williams

## Women today

1

Below are some examples of ways in which women today are active in the service of the church and God's people. Which of these activities do you think are especially valuable or significant? Which are not as significant to you? Why?

Activity	Especially significant	Not as significant
a. Making quilts for needy people		
b. Serving as a pastor		
c. Initiating a communitywide food project for the hungry		
d. Serving on a synod or churchwide board on outreach		
e. Writing letters to state legislators or members of Congress to increase programs to assist elderly widows		
f. Having a women's Bible study meet in one's home		
g. Serving God mainly through one's secular career (finance, teaching, clerking, law, and so forth)		
h. Raising a family		
i. Volunteering to answer a crisis telephone line		
j. Teaching parenting skills to unwed mothers and helping them to improve their lives		
k. Inviting a lonely person for dinner		

What factors entered into your choice of “especially significant” activities? What factors make it difficult to use one activity as being especially significant over another?

## JOURNEYING THROUGH THE WORD

In this session we will journey with Peter and Paul to discover how God raises up women of faith and service to communicate the good news of God’s love.

### Paul’s surprising travels and ours

We’ll begin with Lydia’s story, since she serves as a good bridge from our last session on Priscilla and Aquila. Read Acts 16:9-15, 40.

### Changed itinerary

Read the verses that precede and introduce our journey (Acts 16:6-10). Who is guiding and directing this missionary journey of Paul, Timothy and Silas?

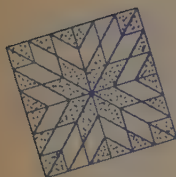
Have you, like Paul, ever experienced a time on your life’s journey, when certain doors seemed to be closed to you, and you only later realized that it was God who was guiding and guiding you to something else?

The phrase used in verse 7, “the Spirit of Jesus,” appears nowhere else in Scripture. It appears here perhaps to emphasize that it was the risen Christ who was guiding and guiding Jesus’ followers in Acts. How do you experience the guidance and direction of the spirit of Jesus in your life today? Through regular prayer and Bible study? Through sharing and discussion with family or trusted friends? A counselor or spiritual director?

### A changed audience

It is not surprising that Paul “put two and two together” and

got the message (in verse 10) that God was calling him and his co-workers "to preach the gospel" in Macedonia. (The co-workers who accompanied Paul on his voyage to Macedonia at this point seem also to include Luke, the author of Acts, for the pronoun *we* suddenly appears in verse 10 and subsequent verses.) But what is perhaps surprising is who Paul and his companions find on the sabbath day in Philippi (verse 13). They go outside of town by a river, where they "supposed there was a place of prayer." (The Jews would generally choose a place for worship near a river, because of ritual washings or purifications.)



## 6

From his vision, whom do you think Paul expected to find in Philippi? Whom did he actually find gathered there? (See verse 13.)



■ The Greek word translated in verse 13 as *place of prayer* can either mean the act of praying, or a synagogue, the building where people prayed. There was no building here in Philippi—only an open-air meeting spot—perhaps because at least 10 men had to be present before a synagogue could be established.



Poor Paul! So far on Paul's journey God not only changed the itinerary on him, but also the audience to whom he expected to preach. Perhaps we wouldn't have been as surprised as Paul to find women gathered together at that place of prayer. Today, even though the leadership of many churches is still almost entirely male, it is women who are the vast majority in most "places of prayer" on Sunday morning. And after all, women had followed Jesus throughout his ministry, followed him even to the cross, and were the first witnesses to the Resurrection.



Paul and his companions "sat down and spoke to the women who had come together." That simple activity shows the revolutionary character of the early Christian church, for there was a rabbinical saying that "it would be better for the Temple to be burnt, than taught to a woman."

Read verse 14.

What does this passage tell us about Lydia? The first Christian convert in Europe was a career woman—and probably a wealthy career woman at that. She came from the city of Thessalonica.



tira, in a country also called *Lydia*. Dyeing cloth was a luxury trade. Perhaps Lydia would be successful in fashion retailing today. Or perhaps she would be into real estate, or a vice-president of marketing.



Lydia, the text says, “was a worshiper of God.” She was a Gentile who obviously did not see herself as a “self-made woman” who got where she was on her own. She was evidently searching for something more—and was, therefore, drawn to the Jewish community, perhaps already in Thyatira and in Philippi. The same Spirit that led Paul to that place of prayer on the outskirts of Philippi now led Lydia to faith: “the Lord opened her heart to give heed to what was said by Paul.”

### A changed person

Like most good business persons, Lydia seems action-oriented. She takes immediate action after she comes to faith.

What are the two things Lydia does after hearing Paul's teaching? (See verse 15.)



■ It appears that Lydia is a single person, since no mention is made of her husband. But “her household”—probably made up of servants and business employees—is baptized. She must have had a large home, as she “prevailed” upon Paul and his traveling companions to stay there. Undoubtedly it became a “house church,” the first gathering point for worship and nurture for the Philippian church. There is a hint of its “house church” character already in verse 40, where Paul and company visit Lydia after they get out of prison, to see “the brethren” and exhort them before they leave town.

How does your congregation or women's group practice hospitality to visitors or strangers? How could

If the history of the Spirit's activity in your congregation could be recorded, who would be some of the women like Lydia who should be mentioned?



## Peter's surprising journey and ours

Peter was on his second missionary journey—"going here and there" (Acts 9:32) to encourage and strengthen and nurture the saints. In Lydda, a town which lies about 25 miles north west of Jerusalem, Peter meets and heals a paralyzed man in Christ's name (verses 32-35).

### A changed itinerary

Read Acts 9:36-43.

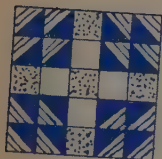
10

What causes the change in Peter's itinerary from Lydda to Joppa? (See verses 36-39.)

11

Have you ever experienced interruptions from your plans that turned out to be more valuable or significant than your original intentions?

■ In verse 36, Tabitha, or Dorcas, is called a disciple. She is the only woman in the New Testament to receive that designation. Disciples, Jesus says, are those who "hear the Word of God and do it" (see Luke 8:19-21), or who "bear much fruit and 'love one another as I have loved you'" (John 15:8,12). See also what James says about being "doers of the word and not hearers only" and his definition of true religion (James 1:22-27; 2:8, 14-17).



12

What evidence do you see in our study text (Acts 9:36-39) that Dorcas was a "true disciple"?

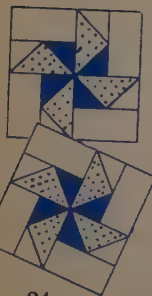
### A changed audience


A very different audience of women surround Peter in Dorcas' upper room (verse 39) than Paul met on his Macedonian travels. Not "high-standing" Greek women, leaders like Lydia, but weeping widows.

### A changed life

Read Acts 9:40-42.

The God who always has compassion on widows and orphans has compassion on the weeping widows of Joppa and, through






Peter, changes Dorcas from death to life. Peter's power is not his own; it comes out of prayer and the name of Jesus (verses 34, 40). In that name and the power of the risen Christ, all of our itineraries are changed, like Tabitha's was: from death to life. In that name and power of the risen Christ, all of us come to faith—like Lydia and her household in Philippi, and like those who heard of Dorcas's resurrection in Joppa (verse 42).

## Traveling to today

3 With whom do you most identify in today's session? How are you like a Lydia or Dorcas? In what ways?

■ The real message of this session is that the "acts of the apostles" in the early church—and now—are really the miraculous acts of God. It is God's activity that "opens the hearts" of women of high station like Lydia, and turns them into leaders in the church. It is God's activity that "opens the hearts" of women like Dorcas, and turns them into true disciples, full of "good works and acts of charity." And it is God's activity, then and now, that raises up women to serve and, in a thousand and one ways, constantly turns death into life for God's people.

But there is another important message in this session: that women in the church today are called to nurture and respect one another's individual callings.

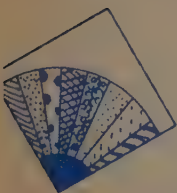


In one sense, you probably couldn't find two more different women than Lydia and Dorcas. The one sold "purple cloth," a luxury item for those who could afford it. The other sewed cloth so that widowed women who could afford little—if anything at all—had something to wear and keep them warm. Lydia, we could probably say, was mostly involved in evangelism and Christian education; Dorcas was involved in social ministry.

Yet deep down, these two seemingly different women were companions cut from the same cloth. Lydia took the profits from her lucrative purple cloth trade and used them to make her home a hospitable place. Perhaps she encouraged others to generous stewardship by the example of her own giving. Dorcas used her cloth directly, to make coats and dresses for widows who had none. Both had hearts "opened to the Lord" and followed the Spirit's leading to use their particular gifts

to proclaim new life in Christ and serve those around the church. The stories of Lydia and Dorcas remind us that there are "many gifts, but one spirit" (see 1 Corinthians 12:4)—and that all of the varied activities of women today are valuable and significant expressions of God's call.

**14** What are some of the differences that sometimes divide women in the church today? How could you personally—or this Bible study group—do an even better job of respecting one another's callings, and nurturing and supporting other women in the use of their gifts?



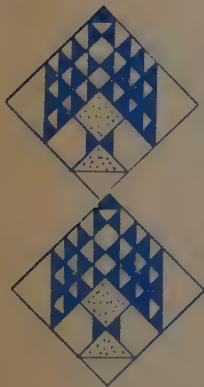
### COMPANIONS IN DEED

During the coming months, consider personally expressing your thanks to a specific "Dorcas" or "Lydia" whose ministry inspires you. You might write a letter; visit; make a phone call; or financial contribution; or volunteer to help someone in a specific way.

### COMPANIONS IN PRAYER AND PRAISE

You might take turns in your study group offering thanks to God for raising up Dorcas- and Lydia-like persons in the church today, or thanking God for the specific gifts of women in your group.

Or, you might want to close by singing "Blest Be the One That Binds" (*LBW* 370), or listening to the song "Many Gifts, One Spirit" that follows Session 8 on the audiocassette.



### JOURNEYING ON

Next session we'll study the contributions of some other women in the New Testament church—as people who pray and prophesy. They are named, unnamed and little-known women, and you'll find their stories in three chapters of Acts—1:12-12:17; 21:9.

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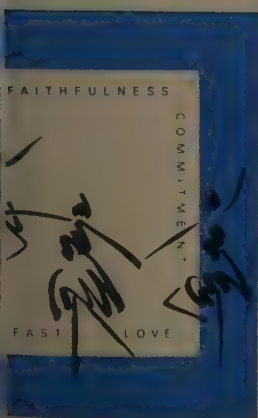
# 3 Companions in Waiting

Study Text: Acts 1:12-14; 12:12-17; 21:9

Phyllis N. Kersten and E. Louise Williams

The average North American, someone has calculated, spends a total of three to four years of his or her lifetime waiting. Waiting in the check-out line at the store. Waiting for a bus or plane. Waiting to see the dentist or doctor. Waiting on "hold" on the phone. Waiting for a teenage daughter or son to come home. Waiting for someone to apologize. Waiting for test results. Waiting for vacation pictures to be developed. Waiting to get married. Waiting for the baby to be born. Waiting for someone to die. Waiting for things to get better. Waiting for a friend to visit. Waiting . . .

What does it feel like to wait? What do you do while you wait? How it feels to wait depends in large part on what you are waiting for, whom you're waiting with, and what you can do while you wait. The three chapters of Acts we study in this session have to do with waiting and with what God's people, especially the women, do while they wait.



## JOURNEYING THROUGH THE WORD

### Waiting and praying

Read Acts 1:12-14.

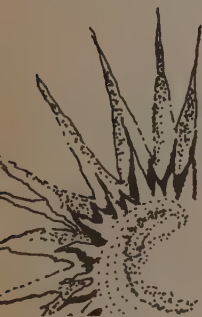
Gathered together in the Upper Room in Jerusalem were the 11 apostles (the same list as in Luke 6:14-16, minus Judas Iscariot), the women (perhaps the same ones mentioned in Luke 8:2 and Luke 24:10), and members of Jesus' family, his mother Mary and his brothers.

The women, including Mary, are simply part of the community, as far as we can tell, taking part in the activities of the people who had followed Jesus and now waited together.

**1** What do you think was the mood of their waiting? (Look at the first 11 verses of Acts, Chapter 1, to review what had gone on before. Then look at Acts 2:1-4 to see what was coming.) Were the disciples (and remember that *disciples* included "the women") grieving Jesus' death? Were they excited about the promise of the Holy Spirit? How do you think they felt about the task set before them in Acts 1:8? Do you think anyone in the Upper Room suggested that they should not be there, but should rather be out doing what Jesus had instructed them to do—witness?

■ This was for the disciples a time of transition. Jesus was now physically gone from them. The disciples were to be witnesses to the ends of the earth. And what did they do? Pray

**2** What do you suppose their prayer was like? How did they pray? What did they pray for? The disciples were Jewish and probably prayed the psalms. If so, what psalms do you think they might have prayed now? Do you think their prayers consisted of talking or of silence?



■ The disciples, the women and the men, had a big task before them. The issue was not so much knowing what to witness. They had, after all, followed Jesus and learned from him before and after his death and resurrection. What they waited for now was empowerment, and that is the work of the Holy Spirit. But the Spirit of power is always a gift. It can never be programmed. It can only be prayed for, waited for.

**3** How does one wait for a gift? How does one pray for a gift that has been promised? How does one prepare to receive the gift of the Spirit?

Read Acts 12:12-17.

In this passage members of the community are once again waiting and praying. This time the place is identified as the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark.

Sources dating back to the sixth century A.D. identify this house as the place of the Upper Room of the Last Supper and as the headquarters for the church at Jerusalem. We can't be sure that it is the same house, but the possibility that it is opens up some interesting speculations. That it is identified as Mary's house, rather than John Mark's, indicates that Mary was a key person in the life of the community. She was, no doubt, a leader of some sort—maybe a little like Phoebe or Lydia or Priscilla. She was evidently wealthy. Her home was large enough to have a courtyard with a gateway, and she had servants.

1 What do you think was the mood of the disciples' waiting this time? (Read Acts 12:1-11 to understand the context.) What do you think they were feeling? What do you think they were talking about?

2 What do you suppose their prayer was like? How did they pray? What might they have prayed for? Which psalms would have been appropriate?

■ Peter, who had been on Herod's death row, was miraculously delivered from prison. At first, he was in a daze; but when he realized what had happened, he went to Mary's house. The scene there is comical. The maid, Rhoda (how unusual to record in the text the name of such a lowly woman!) is so excited at hearing Peter's voice through the door that she fails to let him in and hurries to tell the others that Peter is there. The others do not believe her and try to explain away what she is saying.

3 Can you recall another time when Jesus' disciples failed to believe a remarkable story told by women? (See Luke 24:1-11.) Why might they have had trouble believing what they heard from those women then and from Rhoda in this story?

It almost seems as if the disciples were praying for Peter but didn't really expect their prayers to be answered—or at least not answered in this way.

**7** How do you pray for others—the kind of prayer called intercessory prayer? How do you expect your prayers to be answered?



■ In both of the passages from Acts, the community of disciples is praying. Sometimes talking about prayer isn't easy. In prayer we enter into the mystery of God and of our relationship with God. And it is difficult to find words to express a mystery or a wonder. Our words are always inadequate—just as words are inadequate to describe fully other mysteries and wonders in our lives, like being in love, seeing beauty, or feeling deep grief. It is hard for us to talk about prayer because mere words are never enough to capture what it is all about.

It is also difficult to talk about prayer, because prayer is very personal. How one communes with God is different for each person and is shaped by who each of us is in our history, our personality, and so forth. No two people's experiences are exactly alike. It is often hard to talk with others about unique personal experiences. And often when we do, there is a temptation to think that our experience should be like someone else's, or that everyone's experience is like ours.

The challenge as we talk about prayer—our personal prayer alone and the praying we do corporately with other Christians—is to receive each one's experience as valid, to learn from each other, and to nurture the stirrings of the Spirit within each of us.

**8** These texts from Acts, chapters 1 and 12, reflect some diversity in prayer. What do these passages suggest about prayer and the way people pray? Which type of praying is more compatible with your own style? Do you tend to think of prayer more as talking to God, or listening to God? More as openness to God, or asking for something? More as something you do alone, or do with others?

## Waiting and prophesying

Read Acts 21:7-9.

The prophet Joel speaks of the day of the Lord, a time that will be marked by an outpouring of God's spirit (see Joel 2:28-32). That outpouring, Joel writes, will enable prophecy by "your sons and daughters." Peter quotes these verses from Joel in his pentecost sermon in Acts 2:14-21. In both the gospel of Luke and in Acts, the writer Luke seeks to show that the age of fulfillment has arrived, and the sign of the times is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, marked especially by prophecy.

Since, in this session, we are focusing on women's involvement in the church, the circumstances surrounding the visit of Paul (and whoever else is included in the *we* of Acts 21:7-8) are not as important for us as the passing reference to Philip's four unmarried daughters who prophesied.

Whom do you think of when you think of a prophet? Do you readily think of women in that role? Why, or why not?

■ For people in the early church and for the readers of Acts, perhaps women prophets were common—so common that only passing reference is necessary.

There were prophetesses, as they called them then, in the Old Testament, too: Miriam (Exodus 15:20), sister of Moses and Aaron who led song and dance in praise of God who delivered Israel from slavery in Egypt; Deborah (Judges 4:4), who also ruled Israel in the time of the judges; Huldah (2 Kings 22:14), who was consulted by kings.

■ We don't even know the names of the daughters of Philip. We only know that they are one more sign that the Spirit had been poured out. They had the authority to pass on to others the revelation they had received as a gift from God. Prophets in New Testament times taught, expounding upon the message they had heard. They had caught a vision of the new age begun in Jesus Christ. They, by God's grace, had an idea of what the living of that vision would look like—while the people of God waited for the fulfillment of God's promises.

Those who prophesied—the women and the men—held up



the vision. They pointed the way to the fulfillment that had already begun, but was still to come. And they called people to repentance and to a way of life that was faithful to the vision God had revealed to them.

## 11

How would you describe the “vision” of life as God intends it to be? What kind of prophesying could help call people to live toward that vision? Who are some of the people you see as prophesying in that way today? In what ways are you, or could you become, a “prophet”?




■ Sometimes in the church those who pray and those we might call prophets are at odds with each other. The prophets are looked at by some more as “activists,” seeing the fulfillment of God’s promises to be worked out by God’s people. They are calling, and leading the way, for people to get involved, to change the world—or, at least, some little corner of it. Those who pray, on the other hand, are seen by some as those who opt out, leaving it all in God’s hands, retreating from involvement. They are more likely to pray for change than to speak about it or act for it.


But the church needs both pray-ers and prophets—and, of course, the picture isn’t always either/or. Each of us is probably called at times to be both. But most of us are probably a little more comfortable with one or the other. The challenge is to learn the benefits of both praying and prophesying. Then we can learn to be companions with those whose gifts and callings differ from our own. And we can begin to nurture also our lesser-used gifts.

## 12

Do you identify yourself more as one who prays, or as one who prophesies? Are you both? How do you think others view you? If you see yourself more as a pray-er, how do you look at those who are more prophet-like? If you see yourself more as a prophet, how do you view the pray-ers? How can/do you affirm and support those whose gifts and callings seem to be other than yours? How could/do they affirm and support you?



■ Inside our own beings and in our communities, we need both pray-ers and prophets. The pray-er helps us remember that we are not God. We are creatures of God with limits. We are not in charge of the universe. God is. When we pray, we entrust ourselves and all that we know to the God who knows us, who is infinitely trustworthy, and who looks upon the whole creation with lovingkindness and mercy.



The prophet helps us remember that we are creatures who have the Spirit of God breathed into us—first at creation, then in our rebirth by the water and the Spirit through the gift of Baptism, and each day as we rise to live in God's own forgiving love. From the beginning we were entrusted with the tending of creation. Then we were called to a ministry of reconciliation—to help bring what is broken apart back to wholeness. We are to extend God's own lovingkindness and mercy. We are to help call the church and the world *home*—to the rest and fulfillment that God intended. We are to care for the “widows and orphans”—those who have no power, no status, no hope, no home. The God into whose hands we entrust everything in prayer places some of that “entrusted care” back into our feeble hands. We can only dare take it when we have waited for, and received, the Spirit of power.

## COMPANIONS IN DEED

What are some of the ways you, individually or as a group, are companions with others in prayer and prophecy? Are you ready to involve yourself in some new way in the church's work through prayer or prophecy?

## COMPANIONS IN PRAYER AND PRAISE

Observe a few moments of silence, and then pray this prayer: *Almighty God, we praise you for the women and men you have sent to call the church to its tasks, renew its life, and support its work in prayer. Raise up in our own day the pray-ers and prophets inspired by your Spirit, whose voices will give strength to your church and proclaim the reality of your kingdom; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

Adapted from prayer for “Renewers of the Church,” *Lutheran Book of Worship*, p. 37 copyright © 1978.

## JOURNEYING ON

With the next session we begin a study of Mary, the mother of Jesus, focusing on how she is God's companion and ours. ■

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# Eliab's Earth

Janet Russell Alcántara and  
José Alcántara Mejía

First of all you must understand: he was not an outstanding man. Eliab was a poor farmer amongst poor farmers in southern Mexico—the Mixtec Indian region of Oaxaca. And even amongst his neighbors, he was not a man that you would notice. He was not a leader. He was a very ordinary, very quiet sort of person.

One day in a Bible study, Eliab heard the history of creation. The first human beings were, like himself, farmers. Their duty was to care for the earth, to keep *shalom* with the earth. He listened and heard that *shalom* was the relationship between love and justice. But in times when there was no compassion or justice it came to mean the effort to *make shalom*: reconciliation.

Eliab puzzled over the words and fingered them in his mind. When he arrived home, he looked at the slopes around his village: red and empty, gouged and tortured with erosion. And he felt pity and shame. "My ancestors and myself, we have not kept *shalom* with the earth," he observed.

One day, he approached his neighbors with an idea: let us plant the barren hills with trees.

But his neighbors scoffed. "Plant our land with trees? Why should we do that? What will trees give us? What we *need* is corn!"

Eliab did not know how to reply. But he would not forget *shalom*. So he went to the local branch of the State Department of Agriculture and said that he wished to reforest the land around his village. Could he have some trees? The department was astonished: for years its pleas for reforestation had fallen upon indifferent ears. Yes, they would give him some trees.

One day, when Eliab had nearly forgotten the government's promise, a truck arrived in a cloud of dust before his humble

doorstep. The truck brought trees—5000 of them! Five thousand little trees for him to plant. Alone. Alone he began to plant his little trees on the denuded hills that huddled closest to his home.

Word swept the village: "Eliab is planting trees. He's gone crazy!" A crowd soon gathered to watch the spectacle of Eliab planting trees, quietly with determination. "Why are you doing this?" the neighbors demanded, astonished.

Eliab would not answer. Instead he invited: "Help me to plant, and I will tell you why I do this."

"Planting trees isn't something to do because we will get something out of it; at least, not right away. It is because we must take care of our earth," he told those whose curiosity led them to help plant.

As more neighbors started to plant, they too heard Eliab speak about words like *shalom* and *reconciliation*. The act of planting made the words real.

One day, the people organized themselves to work together to conserve their land and heal it, to conserve and heal their water. The people, too, needed care and not abuse. Simple health programs grew into a clinic. Before long, the whole atmosphere of Eliab's village had changed.

Were you to go to that place and ask the villagers why they were moved to make these changes they might repeat some of Eliab's quiet words: "To care for God's creation, to restore it: that is the reason why we were put here. We now cherish the place God has given to us, and it responds to us." ■

Eliab is an actual person and his story is real. He now serves as a local promoter for AMEXTRA, a Mexican organization working for a changed physical, social and spiritual reality for human beings. For the past four years, United States Lutheran and AMEXTRA communities have been working together exchanging visits, abilities and insights.—JRA & JAM

*Janet Russell Alcántara and her husband José Alcántara Mejía, Mexico City, Mexico, founded AMEXTRA in 1983 and work to effect change through community work. They spent 11 weeks in Nebraska last fall evangelizing throughout that ELCA synod as part of the World Mission Evangelist Task Force.*



# WAR AGAINST THE POOR

**War Against the Poor: Low-Intensity Conflict and Christian Faith** by Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer (Orbis, 1989, \$11.95).

"Living and working in Central America, I witnessed a level of human suffering that would defy the imaginations of most U.S. citizens," notes Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer in his book. Then he begins to describe the ways in which we as U.S. citizens contribute to the suffering of the people of El Salvador.

In El Salvador "it is a crime to be a Christian and to demand justice," says a man who is a peasant and layworker. We are reminded that Jesus declares his ministry as "good news to the poor," "release to the captives," "sight to the blind," and "liberty to the oppressed" after he resisted temptations of national fame, wealth and power (Luke 4:1-13).

The final chapter of *War Against the Poor* is a call to Christians in the United States to be converted—to be the people of God and recognize their responsibility to the suffering people of Central America.

Judy Isaacson  
Minneapolis, Minnesota



# WHAT PRIZE AWAITS US

**What Prize Awaits Us: Let from Guatemala** by Bernice Kita (Orbis, 1988, \$10.95 paperback).

Bernice Kita served as a Maryknoll missionary in Guatemala for 14 years. From 1977 to 1983, her work took her to isolated Indian villages, where she helped establish cooperative communities, trained catechists, and became a part of the village life. During that period, she wrote news reports to the United States which concentrated primarily on the human costs of the wars of El Salvador and Nicaragua, even though the war against the Mayan Indians in the Guatemalan Highlands was just as destructive.

Through these letters to friends and family, we have the opportunity to glimpse the starkness of life in the Guatemalan Highlands and to marvel at the faith and determination shown by the Mayan Indians living in the gospel. At the same time we are treated to all the day-to-day happenings which bring these stories alive. Bernice Kita does a service by presenting the Guatemalan Indians as ordinary people living in extraordinary conditions.

Karen  
Oakland, California



# HOPE AND SUFFERING

**Hope and Suffering** by Bishop Desmond Tutu (Eerdmans, 1987, \$6.95).

Bishop Desmond Tutu, winner of the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize, struggled

the chain of apartheid in Africa. His influence as a speaker, traveler, and educator within the church has made Christians aware of the unchristian ties that bind the South African people, both Black and White.

There are many similarities between Bishop Tutu and Martin Luther King Jr. Bishop Tutu practices nonviolence, believes in nonviolent civil disobedience. He speaks openly against government policies that have to support human rights, opt instead to protect their "material interests." He openly speaks against churches that embrace apartheid.

This book will help you understand the struggle for justice and freedom in South Africa that is rooted in biblical history and rooted in Africa. This book may make you uncomfortable, but read it anyway.

*Kathy Norum  
Alexandria, Minnesota*



## CREATING THE CARING CONGREGATION

**Creating the Caring Congregation** by Harold H. Wilke (Abingdon, \$6.95).

Can your church welcome people with disabilities as fully committed, equal members of the body of Christ and the human family? Do they participate fully in the life of the congregation according to the gifts God has given them?

The church can be just one more institution which excludes people with disabilities. Architectural and ordinal barriers can make participation in worship and fellow-

ship difficult or impossible.

Author Harold H. Wilke challenges congregations to eliminate the barriers which keep people separated from church and society. He directs attention to Scripture which affirms people with disabilities and challenges the church to question biblical interpretations that exclude people from ministry.

In this small book, congregations will find ways to say: "We are accessible, come join us in ministry."

*Nan Richard  
Rome, New York*



## THE HANDMAID'S TALE

**The Handmaid's Tale** by Margaret Atwood (Fawcett, 1986, \$4.95 paperback).

Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* is a futuristic novel set in the United States during the early 21st century. A biblical patriarchy called the Republic of Gilead has been established in reaction to late 20th-century liberalism. It is a terrifying place. We see the new society through the eyes of a Handmaid who tells us about her life now, but also remembers her previous life.

The society in Gilead is highly structured, and women's roles are dangerously compartmentalized. For example, Wives run the households, Marthas do the housework, Aunts operate the brainwashing stations for the Handmaids, and Handmaids bear the children. The women have no freedom of choice about their roles and are dependent upon men who control all decision-making.

The Handmaid, through her narrative, reconstructs the evolution of the present power structure. The

process is frighteningly believable: and the reader will recognize, only too well, present-day reflections of Atwood's Gilead.

Wendy Olmstead  
Wichita, Kansas



## MAKE A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

**Make a World of Difference: Creative Activities for Global Learning** (Office on Global Education of Church World Service, National Council of Churches of Christ, USA, 1989; price information below).

Need ideas for planning a global education activity in your church? Here's good news. The Office on Global Education of Church World Service has just produced this user-friendly manual of activities, chock-full of hands-on ideas for learning about global issues.

The ideas in this hefty 275-page spiral-bound handbook are organized under these headings: "Building Community," "Thinking Globally," "Understanding Hunger," "Weaving in the Arts," "Cooking Up a New Perspective" and "Finding and Using Films." This resource provides a wealth of inspiration for students and teachers of global education.

While a limited supply lasts, the book is being offered—thanks to the support of world hunger funds—for \$2.50 from the ELCA Commission for Church in Society, 8765 W. Higgins Rd., Chicago, IL 60631, attention: Marianne Johnson. After that, it is available at its regular \$16.95 price from Augsburg Fortress locations.

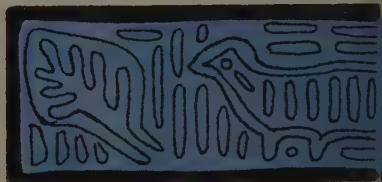
Mary Carlson  
Evanston, Illinois



"Ask us" . . . that's what *Preguntenos* means in Spanish. And what better way to find out about people's life situations than to go to the original source—the people themselves.

That's just what *Preguntenos*, 40-page resource guide on Central America, does. In it you'll find items and resources described in a list on page 39, keyed to individual Central American and Caribbean countries, and offering information and insights from people in the lands. In its introduction, *Preguntenos* states its purpose: to help Evangelical Lutheran Church in America members "increase their understanding of, and respect for, Central American countries as they seek to bring peace, social stability, religious freedom and human rights to the region."

The artwork on these pages—Mayan glyphs—is taken from the cover of the resource and is typical





# PREGUNTENOS

graphics that liberally illustrate inside—enhanced by quotes, ac- ideas, visual data, and more. the paper *Preguntenos* is print- makes a statement: it's recy-



*Preguntenos: A Resource Guide on Central America* is produced by the Peace Education Department of the

ELCA Commission for Church in Society, copyright 1990. The art on these pages is taken from the cover of the resource guide, which draws upon various Central American art forms and symbols.

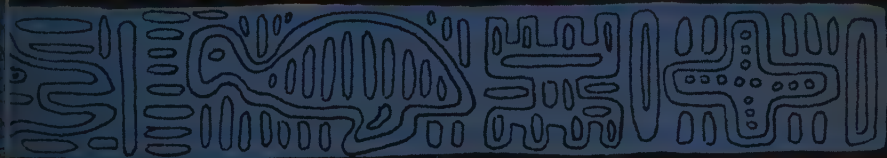
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*Laurel Hensel  
Chicago, Illinois*



# Deeds of Love

Parables, or "teaching stories," can be effective ways to make a point. The two parables on these pages show how believers are asked to respond in faith to the needs and cries of their neighbors: with charity and with advocacy.

One parable speaks of a man, who, as he walks down a beach, sees a boy picking up stranded starfish from the sand and throwing them back into the ocean.

The man reproves the boy, noting there are thousands of miles of beach and millions of stranded starfish, and asks, "Why bother when you can't possibly make a significant difference?"

The boy throws one more starfish into the ocean and replies, "It makes a difference to this one."

The starfish parable affirms the message of Jesus in Matthew 25: 31-46. Christians are called to respond in love and feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and care for the most unfortunate among us—even when the problems seem overwhelming.

Another parable, told below, reminds us of an equally important response: advocacy, or efforts to change the root causes of a problem.

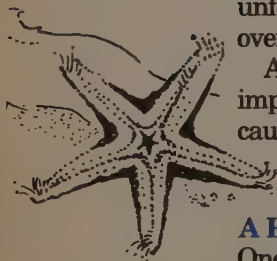
## A Parable of Good Works

Once upon a time there was a small village on the edge of a river. The people there were good and the life in the village was good. One day a villager noticed a baby floating down the river. The villager quickly jumped into the river and swam out to save the baby from drowning.

The next day this same villager was walking along the river bank and noticed two babies in the river. He called for help, and both babies were rescued from the swift waters. And the following day four babies were seen caught in the turbulent current. And then eight, then more, and more.

The villagers organized themselves quickly, setting up watch towers and training teams of swimmers who could resist the swift waters and rescue babies. Rescue squads were soon working 24 hours a day. And each day the number of helpless babies floating down the river increased.

The villagers organized themselves efficiently. The re-



ds were snatching many children each day. Groups trained to give mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Others shared formula and provided clothing for the chilled babies. Many, particularly elderly women, were involved in making clothing and knitting blankets. Still others provided homes and placement.

While not all the babies, now very numerous, could be saved, the villagers felt they were doing well to save as many as they could each day. Indeed, the village priest praised them in their good work. And life in the village continued on that basis.

One day, however, someone raised the question, "But where are all these babies coming from? Who is throwing them into the river? Why? Let's organize a team to go upstream and see who's doing it." The seeming wisdom of the elders countered: "And if we go upstream, who will operate the rescue operations? We need every concerned person."

"But don't you see," cried the one lone voice, "we can't find out who is throwing them in, we can't stop the problem and no babies will be born. By going upstream we can eliminate the cause of the problem." "That is too risky."

And so the numbers of babies in the river increased daily. Those saved increased, but those who drowned increased even more.

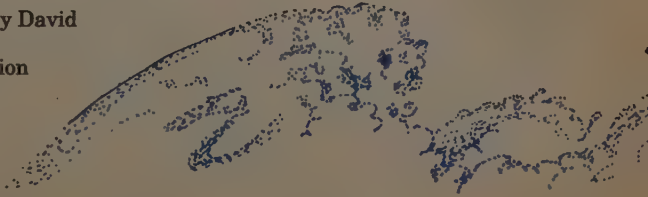
**Put them together,** the two parables suggest that both charity and advocacy are essential components of the Christian faith. When learning of a famine in Ethiopia, for example, Christians respond charitably with food and supplies. We also seek to investigate the causes of the famine through agencies that help the people of the area employ good farming practices, build wells, and reforest their land.

Like all good parables, the two included here are open to many interpretations and elicit reactions and questions important to think about. Readers may want to ponder the parables offered here, asking themselves, "What do these stories have to say to me?"—SES ■



**"Why bother  
when you can't  
possibly make  
a significant  
difference?"**

Parable of Good Works" by David  
from *Must We Choose*  
Reprinted by permission  
of CIRCUS, a ministry  
funded by the  
Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America.



## In Brief:

# Peace with Justice

Pe  
On

**T**here is something about a big idea that doesn't take a lot of words. *Multum in parvo* ("much in little") is how the ancient Romans described the phenomenon. "More with less," we might say today. "Good things come in small packages."

Sometimes big ideas find their way into bumper stickers, onto slogan buttons, placards, notepaper, sweatshirts, and pins. And sometimes these brief messages are as potent and thoughtful as a treatise on the topic. Maybe more so—because the brevity jars the mind, arrests the attention, and makes us smile, "Ah, yes!"

On these two pages are a selection of slogans and phrases related to peace and justice, seen in various

forms. What are some other ones you'd like to add? Your circle, or any Sunday school class, could no doubt suggest still others. Talking about peace and justice says a lot together, or with a young class, might make a good learning exercise, especially if the group renders and displays their ideas as homegrown bumper stickers.—NJS



You can't hug  
your children with  
nuclear arms.

# Is Our Security



armament begins  
the playroom.

treating our  
like dirt.

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here be peace on earth,  
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EL JARS,  
PEOPLE.

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ruin your  
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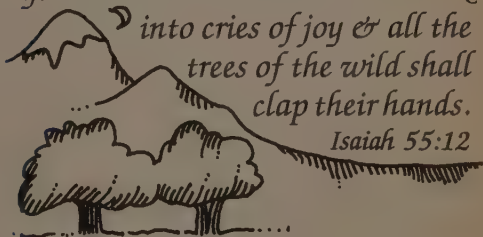
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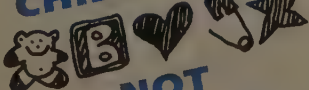
lovers  
nst the bomb

Sticks & stones  
can **break** my bones  
but **WORDS** can  
really hurt me.

You shall indeed go out with joy  
& be led forth in peace. Before  
you mountains & hills shall break  
into cries of joy & all the  
trees of the wild shall  
clap their hands.

Isaiah 55:12



**CHILD CARE**  
  
**NOT**  
**WAR FARE**

It will be a  
great day when  
our schools get  
all the money  
they need and  
the Air Force  
has to hold a  
bake sale to  
buy a bomber.

## Hsueh-Chen Wang

L. DeAne Lagerquist



Hsueh-Chen “Dora” Wang was a young girl when she first heard the Word of God early in the 1900s. Not long after the Wangs moved near the Lutheran mission station in Sinyang, China, her father became a Christian—and the rest of the family followed him into the church. At age nine, Hsueh-Chen Wang was enrolled in the mission school. Since her childhood she was involved with the Lutheran church and its educational ministry: first as a student, then as a teacher and principal.

China changed dramatically during Hsueh-Chen Wang’s lifetime, partly due to its expanded world contacts. In addition to major social and political shifts, vigorous missionary activity played a role.

In the early 1900s, a continent away, Norwegian-American Lutherans were learning to be Americans and to express their faith in English.

They also joined the growing missionary movement of the day. China was a major area of Norwegian-American Lutheran missionary activity. Beginning in the late 1800s, Norwegian-Americans supported workers to share the gospel with Chinese people. Like other American and European groups, the Norwegian-Americans sent pastors, their wives, deaconesses, mission workers, and teachers.

Among the missionaries to China was Marie Anderson, Hsueh-Chen Wang’s teacher and colleague. In Norway, Anderson immigrated to South Dakota as a young woman and attended Augustana College there. The China Mission Society in America sent her to China in 1901. She set about learning Chinese so she could speak with her neighbors and the students at the girls’ school she opened in Sinyangchow. Sup-

## **China was a major area of Norwegian-American Lutheran missionary activity.**

he school came from the Women's Missionary Federation, led by a Dahl, for whom the school was renamed.

Education was a vital part of all missionary work in China. The church-sponsored schools gave Chinese students access to a Western education, as well as an introduction to Christianity. New perspectives came through their schooling and students participate in shaping modern China. Indeed, former students of these schools played key roles in the political events of the early 1900s.

While a student, Wang considered becoming a medical doctor or teacher. Deciding on teaching, she continued her education in Chinese universities. Her career at the Lena School was temporarily cut off in 1926 when civil war and government interference kept the school from opening. A well-trained, Christian teacher, Wang found other assignments but continued to feel that God called her to teach at her alma mater.

When she returned to Sincing, she found soldiers in the school buildings and equipment being looted. Relying upon God's help, Wang set about reorganizing. Students continued to meet in the courtyard. Classes were held in the open. In 1932 Wang was named principal, a delicate position that called for negotiating the school's course in the midst of continuing struggle between the Nationalist and Communist parties. Wang

was also accountable to both the Chinese church and the Lutheran missionary conference.

Principal Wang turned to prayer and the Bible for guidance in running a school that was both Christian and Chinese. Her approach was consistent with her favorite Bible passage: "If the Lord does not build the house, the work of the builders is useless; if the Lord does not protect the city, it does no good for the sentries to stand guard" (Psalm 127:1, Today's English Version). By registering the school with the Chinese government, Wang opened the way for her students to gain admission to Chinese colleges and to hold government positions. But she supplemented the government-approved curriculum with religious instruction, devotional exercises, and prayer. She took down Sun Yat-Sen's portrait so that no one would think that Christians worship a political leader.

As a teacher of young girls and a leader in the church, she helped the Word of God take on flesh and be heard by the people in their own Chinese language. ■



*L. DeAne Lagerquist is an assistant professor of religion at St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota, and a regular contributor to "Foremothers of Faith."*

# Imagine

Linda Brown

**I**magine that it is Sunday morning, and you want to go to church. Now imagine that you are blind. How will you get to the church? The city buses run infrequently on Sundays, if at all. You can't afford a cab. You call the church office and explain your situation. What will the person on the other end say?

*"And there was a man named Zacchaeus. . . . And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not, on account of the crowd, because he was small of stature" (Luke 19:2-3).*

When you arrive at the church an usher escorts you to a pew and hands you a bulletin. What will you do with it? How will you follow the order of service? You sense the congregation coming to its feet for the procession, but the banners so lovingly stitched, the acolyte's bare feet shoved into tennis shoes, the altar flowers—are not part of your worship experience unless someone quietly describes them to you. In the middle of the sermon, for no apparent reason, giggles break out in the congregation. What could have happened?

*"So [Zacchaeus] ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see [Jesus], for he was to pass that way" (Luke 19:4).*

You love to sing, but the congregation does not have copies of Lu-

*theran Book of Worship's* braille tion.

It's time for communion. What you do?

The service ends. What happens now?

You find your way to the coffee hour in the parish hall. It's crowded and noisy, with old friends greeting each other. What do you do?

You hear that volunteers are needed to serve meals to the homeless; you offer to help, provided you get a ride to the soup kitchen. What happens next?

You invite a friend, also blind, to come to church with you, but she says she'd rather listen to the radio. Visiting a church is too much of a hassle. What do you say?

Imagine, for a moment, that you are not imagining. Imagine it is Sunday morning and like me, you are blind. Do you want to go to church?

*"And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for I must stay at your house today. So he made haste and came down and received him joyfully" (Luke 19:5-6).*



Linda Brown is an organist and a member of Christ Lutheran Church in Hartford, Connecticut. She has been blind since birth.

## Brief Prayers on News Items

Sonia C. Groenewold

### World's Lutherans name women to leadership posts

...ing in Brazil earlier this year, Lutheran World Federation named three women to top posts. Christina Rogestam of Sweden is its treasurer, and among its five presidents are Martina Huhn of German Democratic Republic and Sophia Tung from Taiwan. In an interview, Tung promised to continue advocating for a better status for women in the church. "Up to now," she said, "women church workers [in Taiwan] are not considered as 'co-leaders.'"

*Thank you, God of all, for increasing opportunities for women to be in leadership with men in carrying out mission.*

### ELCA staff will take racial awareness training

...ounded by racial and ethnic tensions throughout the world and entered in discussions about inclusivity and quotas, the ELCA is planning to require cultural/racial awareness training for all its churchwide employees.

*God of all, we need your help to be a truly inclusive church.*

### Ethiopians again on brink of starvation

The ongoing civil war and drought in the provinces of Eritrea and Tigray are creating another famine alert. One million Ethiopians starved to death in 1984-85. Unless the situation changes, another 4.5 million face starvation now. Despite difficulties in food aid shipments, Lutheran World Relief and other agencies continue to push food through to the drought-stricken northern provinces.

*Let peace and well-being come to Ethiopia, O God of Love.*

### Three mission events offer 'global university'

Three U.S. colleges are hosting Global Mission Events this month. Participants will worship, study the Bible, sing, share and select from nearly 100 "global university" sessions presented by ELCA missionaries, church leaders and international guests.

*Bless these events and those who participate, O Lord of the whole world.*

Let local, national and international news provide you with material to build a daily prayer list. ■

*Sonia C. Groenewold is news editor of The Lutheran.*

# Music as Therapy

Paula Burtness, Mary Johnson, Keith Sehnert



**Music can be considered** food for the soul. The Book of Psalms talks about making joyful noises, playing the lyre, the trumpet, the horn, lifting up one's voice in joyful song. Is it not true that the songs of holy days and holidays touch us in special ways?

Music and medicine have been linked throughout history. The early Greeks and Romans believed that music had the power to help heal the body and soul. The ancient Persians and Hebrews also employed music to cure various physical and mental illnesses. During the Renaissance, illness was thought to be due to a disruption in the harmonious balance between "body elements," and music was used to restore this harmony. Today, music therapy is finding its place in health-care settings aiding relaxation and recovery.

Scientists have found that our cells, glands, and organs have a characteristic vibrational frequency that absorbs and emits sounds. When relaxed, the human body vibrates at a fundamental inaudible frequency of eight cycles per second. The earth also vibrates at this same fundamental frequency of eight cycles per second. Is there a natural harmony to God's creation?

In recent years the study of the effect of music on behavior, emotions and physiology has led to the use of music as a means of reducing stress, pain, anxiety and isolation. Music

helps individuals achieve a sense of relaxation. Music is used to aid coping with a variety of physical and psychological problems—including back pain, high blood pressure, discomfort during labor and delivery, migraine headaches, depression and ulcers.



**Research on sound** vibration has also shown that baroque composers used rhythms, patterns, harmony and counterpoint in a way that aligned, harmonized and synchronized bodies and minds to more monious patterns. Listeners in these studies reported expanded awareness, strong positive emotions and increased energy, often displaying the physiological signs of relaxation such as decreased blood pressure, pulse and respiration. Another study showed that the greater a person's interest in music, the more his or her emotions were influenced by music.

Dr. Helen Bonny, a music therapist and teacher of music therapy, and author of the book *Music and Your Mind* (Harper and Row, New York, 1971) argues that as medicine approaches the idea that health is an integration of mind, body and spirit, it moves closer to music. Her summary of qualities of music in healing helps us understand the various dimensions of music as therapy:

- **Music is nonverbal.** W

communication is limited and music is multidimensional can provide meaning on many simultaneously.

**Music evokes emotional responses.** It is a mood-changer and facilitates the nonverbal expression of feelings.

**Music evokes mind/body responses.** It is speculated that the production of pain-reducing mood-elevating peptides (endorphins) may be linked to musical experiences.

**Music stimulates our thinking.** It can unlock blocked memories, increase attention span, concentration and motivation.

**Music decreases feelings of stress and fatigue;** it has the ability to relieve inner tensions and contribute to slowing and balancing body functions.

Individuals we seem to be responsive to different kinds of music. The musical selection, or any one piece of music, works for all people in

all situations. Musical selections that are relaxing and meditative to one person can be disruptive and annoying to another. We seem to associate relaxing, as well as displeasing, events in our lives with certain kinds of music. This conditioned learning response influences our music preferences and whether a given piece of music is seen as relaxing.



**Becoming aware of our own particular response to different kinds of music can help us find those that are especially relaxing and healing to us.** By making music a more conscious part of our lives, we can take advantage of its healing properties in body, mind and spirit—one of the goals of taking care of ourselves. ■

*Paula Burtness is a wife and mother who has had a lifelong interest in health issues. Mary Johnson, Ph.D., is a nursing professor at St. Olaf College and has done extensive research on the subject of holistic health. Keith W. Sehnert, M.D., P.A., is a practicing physician and the author of books on selfcare.*



*The Musicare program at Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge, Illinois, uses taped music to help patients relax. Chaplain Roseann Kasayka, right, shows a patient how to use a personal stereo.*

# CHURCH WOMEN UNITED



## A Journey toward Justice

Jane Burton

**Church Women United (CWU), an ecumenical movement of Christian women, has been on a "journey toward justice" for almost half a century.** The journey began in December 1941, when 100 courageous women with a vision of peace founded CWU in the wake of Pearl Harbor, even as the United States became embroiled in war.

They met in Atlantic City and organized the United Council of Church Women—a sisterhood bound together by common faith in Christ and a shared commitment to build a peaceful world in which political, social and economic justice would be a reality for all people.

Today Church Women United stands on the threshold of its 50th anniversary—a movement of women committed to go where the Spirit leads—living in the present, inspired and informed by the past, yet open and challenged by the exciting possibilities of the future. CWU embraces

Protestant, Orthodox, Roman Catholic and other Christian women from some 29 different communions, denominations and faith groups, encompassing a rich diversity of religious tradition, race, age, economic status and ethnic background. CWU works through 1,750 local units across the United States, and state units (including Greater Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico), national offices in New York, Washington, D.C., and the United Nations.

A glance at CWU milestones is an achievement over five decades, a journey that was arduous but faith-filled. Looking back, Church Women United was there

- in 1946 when they became the first nongovernmental organization at the United Nations

- in 1953 when they issued the Declaration of Loyalty in response to the hysteria of the Joe McCarthy era

**Today Church Women United stands on the threshold of its 50th anniversary**

**"I envision CWU as an instrument that can enable women to confront the life and death issues of our time." Claire Randall, CWU president**

**1961** when they launched *Ascent Race* to help achieve justice and participation for all people in a multiracial society;

**from 1966 to 1989** when they initiated *International Causeways*, exchange programs to bring together women of different backgrounds throughout the world—to build bonds of understanding in the global search for peace and justice.

**the 1970s and 80s** when they supported the Equal Rights Amendment, equal roles for women and men within the church, and the United Nations Covenant on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women;

**1977** when they developed the *Platform for a Global Societal Mandate* for action that identified 10 priority issues that govern the quality of life. (The platform was presented to President Carter at the White House.)

**1987** when they adopted *Ascent: Poverty of Women* as their theme, a five-year commitment to use all of CWU's strength and resources to eliminate the root causes of the marginalization and poverty of women and children.

A recurring milestone in CWU's history of faith is one supported by thousands of women across the country. World Community Day, this year titled "Women for Justice/Justice for Women." The service was led by a group of Christian women in Arizona and draws from experiences in their personal journeys for justice.

World Community Day is held annually the first Friday of November and seeks to 1) raise people's consciousness to the condition of women of all races and cultures who are oppressed and 2) lift up in prayer those women who work for justice for women. World Community Day is one of three special services during the year sponsored by Church Women United that bring women together to worship ecumenically. Others are World Day of Prayer (the first Friday in March) and May Fellowship Day (the first Friday in May).

And so, the journey continues. In 1991, CWU will observe its 50th anniversary by responding to the biblical call to celebrate its Jubilee year as a sacred year—to listen, reflect and renew the commitment to live out God's call for justice. The anniversary theme, "Set Free . . . Be Free . . . Jubilee" heralds a joyous celebration.

What of CWU in the future . . . that time beyond Jubilee, in the 21st century? Pointing the way are the words of CWU national president Claire Randall: "I envision CWU as an instrument that can enable women to confront the life and death issues of our time . . . a time for us as women of the church to demand of ourselves the collective effort it will take to reach out to the whole world with the power of the Spirit and to make clear God's message of love and justice." ■

*Jane Burton is director of media and interpretation for Church Women United.*

# If They Can't Read the **Words,** They Can't Read the **WORD!**

Carol M. Worthing

Therese Olson, who lives with her husband Kenny and their three children—Eric, Andrea and Katie—in the little town of Jesup, Iowa, is an improving reader and writer. Therese had difficulty with academics all the way through school and was a poor reader. She wonders now if she had a learning disability but she never was tested. She remembers writing her first poem in fifth grade, and continuing to write poetry on into high school. “One English teacher in particular, was encouraging,” Therese recalls.

**W**hen her father asked, “What do you want to be?” Therese replied, “A writer.” Her father was concerned about her being able to bring this dream to reality. So was Therese. “I lacked self-confidence and self-esteem,” she confides. Therese applied for a nursing program but failed to be accepted. She was told that her “medical vocabulary was lacking.”

While still a high school senior, she married Kenny, two years older. Like her, he was born and raised in Jesup. “I felt helpless to do anything else with my life,” she says. She graduated from high school in 1975.

About a year and a half later she went to work at the Mental Health Institute in nearby Independence, where she had to do a lot of patient charting. Her difficulty with this task motivated Therese to enter a GED (general education degree) program in basic adult education. She tested at the sixth-grade reading level. “I felt crushed beyond repair,” she says. Therese attended a few classes, then quit in despair, feeling “dumb.” She also quit her job to begin their family. Their first child, Eric, was born in 1978.

Some time after Eric's birth Therese reentered the GED program, and this time she tested at the eighth-grade level. Two

months later she quit again. She felt she needed individual help. There were too many students. I felt I was wasting time," she recalls. When the baby was about two, Therese was going through a particularly difficult time. "My self-esteem was in the pits," she says.

**F**riends invited her into a Methodist Women's Bible Study. Therese had been raised Roman Catholic but became Lutheran when she married Kenny. Through soul-searching Bible study and a cousin's sharing of John 1:1, the realization that *Jesus is God* was "like a light turning on" for her. She was hungry for the Word, and for the next three years she eagerly read the Bible, with a dictionary and notebook at her side. This practice of devotional journaling was soon to become a constant part of her life.

She also began reading other devotional writers, like Catherine Marshall and Corrie Ten Boom. She was constantly being fed spiritually, and she loved it. Andrea was born in 1982. While pregnant in 1984 with Katie, Therese sat down one afternoon and wrote a children's story in two hours. Titled "The Invitation," it was later included in a collection of stories published by Concordia Publishing House (publisher for the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod) in St. Louis. Thrilled and scared, she didn't know she was ready for this kind of event in her life.

Again, she went back to the GED program. This time her reading level was measured to be at the college level. Therese had always had the "set-apart" feeling of an artist, but she was constantly asking, "For what? How does God want to use me?" One evening she happened to watch "Bluffing It," a TV special on literacy starring Dennis Weaver. At the end, a message flashed on the screen, saying "Call Laura Hemmes at the Hawkeye Institute of Technology, if interested in learning about the 'One-on-One' tutoring program."

"How many times does the Lord speak to us while we're standing at the kitchen sink?" Therese asks. She sensed the Lord saying to her, "Therese, you couldn't read. I taught you to read. Now, you can help others to learn!"

**S**he called the number and became involved with the tutoring program at the "Success Center" in Waterloo, Iowa, in November of 1987. Therese began writing articles for a monthly newsletter, *The Iowa Literacy Review*.

In conversations with Laura Hemmes at the center, Therese became more aware of the frustrations improving readers face: lack of basic reading material written for adult improving readers, and even less material available with religious content. Laura Hemmes estimates that one out of four people come to their literacy program for help in reading

Scripture, so basic-level devotional material is especially needed.

Not long after this, Therese saw an article in "Seeds for the Parish" (an Evangelical Lutheran Church in America resource publication) on Women of the ELCA's literacy program. Therese had been writing a devotional diary and asked Faith Fretheim, Women of the ELCA director for literacy, if the diary might be helpful to Women of the ELCA's program. Events moved quickly after that, and *We'll Make It: A Devotional Diary for the Improving Reader* (Augsburg Fortress, \$4.95, code number 2-9139) is expected to be off the press

## We'll Make It

*My mind and my body may grow weak, but God is my strength; he is all I ever need.*

*Psalms 73:26*

Dear Lord,

Sometimes the hard work of learning tires me. I look at the jumbled-up lines and curves and feel overwhelmed at trying to unscramble their meanings and sounds. Letters and words I thought I had learned draw a blank in my mind. I want to scream and shake my fists! I want to turn and run away.

You come to me during those times and say, "We'll make it." I hear the patience of your voice and feel the confident grip of your hand.



God understands your discouragement. Give your cares to God. God will lift you up.

From *We'll Make It* by Therese Olson.  
Copyright © 1990 Augsburg Fortress.

n June 1990 (see excerpt on p. 54 and below.)

"It's one of those paradoxes we just don't understand," Therese says—"how a poor reader becomes a good writer." Lutherans are good at embracing paradox, though. And, as the title of her devotional diary promises, with God's help through the struggle, she has found her vocation! ■

*The Rev. Carol M. Worthing recently accepted a call to serve as general secretary for the Illinois Conference of Churches—a statewide ecumenical agency located in Springfield, Illinois.*

Date:

Question:

When have you felt like running away? What did you do?

## Ideas for *We'll Make It: A Devotional Diary*

- Purchase as an "encouragement gift" for an improving reader.
- Purchase and donate to your church library.
- Use as a teaching tool for literacy programs. Have students use the right side of each page for individual journaling (as writing level allows). Or the tutor can write as the student dictates thoughts—and then weave those thoughts into the lesson.
- Place in community agencies as an evangelism effort.
- Enjoy (whether or not an improving reader) the faith-filled devotions and the opportunity for personal reflection and journaling.

*Faith Fretheim*

# About Charlotte Fiechter

Paula R. Kadel



Understanding the way people make choices and fit the pieces of their lives together has been a lifelong interest of Charlotte Fiechter, executive director of Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

When Dr. Fiechter became executive director in January 1990, she brought with her an active intellect and spirit—and a firm faith.

Ask Charlotte Fiechter about the roots of her faith, and she replies, "That's like asking, 'When did you become aware of having two arms?'" For her, "It was there from the beginning. When I got my first allowance—10 cents—it went into the Sunday school offering. The church was always a part of life and the community."

She grew up in Union and Elizabeth, New Jersey, in a German immigrant family that lived in ethnically

mixed neighborhoods. "We all poor together," she says, making the transition from European culture to the United States.

Even though he didn't have the educational opportunities his daughter later enjoyed, Charlotte's father greatly encouraged her intellectual curiosity, especially for history.

"Inspired teachers made history come alive for me, too," she says. Charlotte went on to earn three degrees in history—a B.A. from Wesley College, an M.A. from the University of Chicago and a Ph.D. from Harvard University.

History, though, is more than intellectual exercise. Charlotte points out: "The best indication of what we can do is what we have already done. It tells us how people make choices and how those choices have an impact on others."

☐ *Charlotte brings an active intellect and spirit—and a firm faith—to her position as executive director of the Women of the ELCA*

*"The best indication of what we can do is what we have already done. It tells us how people make choices and how those decisions have an impact on others."*

Even while still in graduate school, Charlotte's career began to lead away from teaching, which she moved, into administrative positions in higher education.

At the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, Charlotte initiated special programs for women, including the Life Options for Women advisory program for women undergraduates.

Later she and a colleague began Careerways, an annual event that attracted some 700-800 women from the Philadelphia area.

Eleven years later, Charlotte assumed the position of principal and director at St. Thomas Christian Academy in Brick Township, New Jersey, a move prompted in part by Charlotte's desire to care for her parents. She found the new situation a delight. "I loved the children. We moved from day one."

At St. Thomas she pitched in and taught sixth-grade math one year, a great experience for a woman who might have been a math scholar had she not been encouraged in such directions when she began college.

"Our church schools are making great contributions," Charlotte says. "Through them the church is doing some fine evangelism and working to meet its inclusivity goals. Many families join and become active members of the church when their children are enrolled in the school."

Although she enjoyed her work as a school administrator, in 1989 Charlotte's eye was caught by an ad in *The*

*Lutheran* seeking candidates for the position of executive director of Women of the ELCA. Here might be a way, she thought, to connect her longtime interest in empowering women, her love for the church, and her considerable administrative background.

In October the board offered Charlotte the appointment as executive director and she was on her way to Chicago to guide Women of the ELCA.

So she packed her books, her word puzzles and jigsaw puzzles, her bathing suit for her recreational swims, her mementos from her travels (most recently to the Soviet Union and Alaska), and moved into an apartment seven miles from the ELCA's Chicago office.

She confesses that as yet, not everything has been unpacked. In fact, she'll likely put off travel she had planned in 1990 so she can get settled in her new home and position.

Some things, though, she won't have to unpack to put them into action: a fascination with the way people make choices, a deep desire to be involved in women's journeys, enthusiasm for education, joy in administration and a faith that's "been there since the beginning." ■

*Paula R. Kadel is vice-president for marketing of Genesis Communications in Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania, and a member of St. Peter's Lutheran Church in North Wales, Pennsylvania.*

## MISSION:

# Community



## woman to woman

### Promoting International Understanding

On June 8, 1990, 27 Woman to Woman participants will arrive from Lutheran churches around the world to begin a six-week visit to Women of the ELCA Synodical Women's Organizations (SWOs). The visit is an opportunity to nourish and support global Christian community, to build friendships, and to foster a support network for women as they work to address justice concerns within their countries.

Such cross-cultural exchanges provide opportunities for mutual learning—about education, faith, concerns, culture, customs and food. Indeed the Woman to Woman guests, their hostesses in this country and all who meet the guests are in for some rich moments of sharing.

The writer of Hebrews says in 13:2, "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unaware." Henri Nouwen, priest, professor and author of *Reaching Out* (Doubleday, 1975) believes that hospitality "should not be limited to the literal sense of receiving a stranger in our home . . . [but it should be understood] as a fundamental attitude toward our fellow human beings which can be expressed in a variety

of ways." Nouwen's thoughts on hospitality offer wisdom for those who will welcome a Woman to Woman guest. According to Nouwen, such a hostess is compassionate and has a desire to know more about people and cultures. She does not have to be a world traveler or speak several languages. She receives her guests with honor, offers them all the care they need and lets them go when it is time to leave.

Hostesses from each synodical women's organization will escort a Woman to Woman visitor during the six-week journey. You can share the experience by attending the functions planned for a guest within your SWO or at the Women of the ELCA First Triennial Convention in Anaheim, California. Contact your Synodical Women's Organization president for information. ■

*Kwang-Ja Yu  
Director,  
Ecumenical  
and  
Cross-Cultural  
Programming*



# MISSION:

*Growth*

## "Those Who Have No Keys"

Homeless is a powerful word that evokes mental images of the places, times, and feelings associated with it. Homelessness is an equally powerful word evoking its own images and feelings.

Reports vary as to the number of homeless people in the United States. Of the 1.5 to 2 million homeless, almost half are children. Not only are some people in the inner city homeless, but also many in rural areas, suburbs, small towns and reservations.

As fall weather approaches and temperatures drop, shelters fill to capacity. Some homeless people appeal to relatives and move in; others will enter transient hotels to find other housing. Still others will sleep in the streets, public parks, terminals, and doorways.

Why are people homeless? There are many reasons and combinations of reasons, including loss of employment or employment at minimum wage, divorce, death of spouse, mental illness and addiction. The "pay-in-front" costs of renting (first-month rent and security deposit) and rules and regulations keep many homeless in a captive state, forced to choose between buying food or shel-

Women of the ELCA considers homelessness a justice issue. To bring the plight of the men, women and children who are poor and homeless to the attention of congregational units, a new resource *Those Who Have No Keys: Homelessness in Our Community* has been developed. Written by Inez Torres Davis, this program takes a sensitive look at what "homes" are, the people in our society who do not have them, and what can be done to help their situation.

This program is designed to increase the awareness of homelessness through prayer, case study narratives, and exploration of biblical texts related to the homeless. It will be available September 1990 for \$1.50 from Augsburg Fortress locations (code 2-9061). ■

Crysta Wille  
Mission:  
Growth



## MISSION:

# Action

## What Is Peace with Justice?

*Peace with Justice* is one of three Mission: Action emphases within the Women of the ELCA. What does "Peace with Justice" mean and do?

It focuses on education and advocacy related to peacemaking and to racial, social and economic justice issues, particularly those that relate to women. Advocacy means *speaking out*—for justice for others, or in support of a position on an issue.

Peace with justice information, organization, and teaching materials are spread across the country through the work of synodical women's organizations, peace with justice coordinators and the Women of the ELCA peace with justice network. This network is made up of peace with justice advocates across the country.

The Women of the ELCA Peace with Justice network frequently joins other peace and justice organizations to provide and share resources, as in Peace with Justice Week, the annual October event sponsored by several denominations, including the ELCA.

Each congregation is encouraged to observe Peace with Justice Week. This year, the theme is "Lift Every Voice" and the Spanish song, "*Yo no puedo callar*" ("I can no longer keep silent").

Every congregation received materials in the May Women of the ELCA packet for the October 14-24 event. More materials may be ordered from: Peace with Justice Week, 777 U.N. Plaza, 12th floor, New York, NY 10017 (212-682-3984).

Other times to highlight peace with justice issues include:

### THIRD MONDAY IN JANUARY

Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday observed;

### FEBRUARY

Black History Month;

### MARCH

Women's History Month;  
Central America Week  
(Anniversary of Bishop  
Romero's Death, March 24)

### FIRST FRIDAY IN MARCH

Church Women United's  
(CWU) World Day of  
Prayer;

### FIRST FRIDAY IN MAY

CWU May Fellowship Day

### LAST MONDAY IN MAY

Memorial Day;

### AUGUST 6 and 9

Anniversary of bombings  
Hiroshima and Nagasaki;

### SEPTEMBER

Literacy Month;  
International Literacy Day  
September 8;

### OCTOBER 14-24

Peace with Justice Week;

### FIRST FRIDAY OF NOVEMBER

CWU World Community  
Day;

### NOVEMBER 11

Armistice Day, observed  
Lutheran Day of Fasting  
Peace. ■

Jennifer V.  
Mission: Action

# Nominees for Women of the ELCA Churchwide Board for 1990–1993 Triennium

Triennial Convention Nominating Committee met in February to select a slate of candidates from those names duly submitted, following constitutional mandates (see Women of the ELCA Constitution and Bylaws, §§ 19-21). The committee is placing in nomination the names below, two for each of the offices of secretary and treasurer and the 17 nonofficer members of the 21-member Women of the ELCA executive board. (*Numbers refer to ELCA region; letters refer to synods within the region.*) The president and president-elect of Women of the ELCA are elected by nominating ballot at convention.

Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the convention. All nominations must have the consent of the nominees, including their willingness to serve if elected, and a floor nomination signed by five delegates. Elections will be held at the July 12-15, 1990 convention, with voting delegates casting the ballots.

<b>Secretary</b>	Virginia Dusman, 8-E	Corrine Olsen, 3-E
Bergstrom, 2-C	Marilyn Eberlein, 3-G	Janet Peterson, 3-D
Laughlin, 6-F	Elizabeth Glasco, 5-A	Marlene Raack, 8-B
	Hattie Hammer, 4-D	Jeanne Rapp, 5-C
	Virginia Hash, 5-F	Gloria Rast, 9-C
<b>Treasurer</b>	Gail Hendrickson, 1-B	Bonnie Redman, 6-D
Arne, 9-B	Raquel Hodge, 9-F	Joan Regal, 3-H
Haines, 8-F	Jenine Jordahl, 5-L	Nan Richard, 7-D
	Kathleen Kerr, 8-D	Sherley Ruby, 2-D
	Mary Ellen Kiesner, 5-J	Mary Sagar, 6-B
<b>Churchwide Board</b>	Donna Krahmer, 3-I	Jannene Sass, 4-A
Blake, 7-C	Phyllis Linn, 7-F	Rosemary Sinniger, 7-A
Breen, 5-H	Shirley Mickelson, 3-C	Carole Suhr, 5-E
Dolyn Carr, 1-E	Nancy Mitchell, 4-B	Joyce Trangsrud, 3-B
Cowen, 5-G	Mary Mueller, 1-D	Shirley Williams, 2-B

For God,  
as we come together in your name, in a beautiful place called Anaheim,  
California, our First Triennial Convention will be a celebration of all that  
you have so graciously given us; the rich earth and its delicate environ-  
ment, our daily bread and companions for our journey.  
As part of our celebration, we will be making many decisions. We will  
select leaders for the next triennium, and plot exciting courses for Women  
of the ELCA. Grant us wisdom, that *our* choices will be *your* choices. Lead  
us down the path that you have so beautifully designed for the Women  
of the ELCA. Keep our hearts and minds on you, Lord Jesus. Amen. ■

## Letters to the editor ♦♦

### Mugs and Plastic-foam

I work at Amoco Foam Products. I am also a member of an ELCA church.

The factory in which I work to help support my church and family makes the product mentioned in the article ["Banning the Plastic-foam Cup: One Year Later," February 1990 LWT].

The products we produce are safe to use and environmentally safe to dispose of. My company has been a leader in polystyrene recycling across the nation.

I [too am concerned] about the environment, for I have two children. I'm also concerned about jobs for my two children in the future. Banning our product would not only cause a loss of the 400 jobs at my factory, but would also affect other workers (up to 300-plus) in the community.

I truly feel the answer lies in awareness, education, commitment and time to make changes for positive things to happen.

*Barbara J. Kouba  
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin*

*LWT has received 10 similar letters from Chippewa Falls.—ED.*

Thank you for the creative promotion of the well-designed mugs to fight the plastic plague. The three young women to whom I gave gift subscriptions already thanked me since they've received the gift card. My mug came promptly . . . packed in plastic peanuts!

*Evelyn Egbert  
Minneapolis, Minnesota*

*Let's reuse the peanuts: as packing*

*material, for children's art projects, in the bottom of plant pots for drainage. . . —ED.*

### March LWT

I picked up my March LWT, read it and feel so exhilarated! Every article had such personal meaning to me. Sometimes I feel so frustrated about making a difference in this world. I want to set an example to my three sons that our environment is precious.

*Jennifer Henne  
Red Hills, Pennsylvania*

When I attended my Iowa Cattle Women's board meeting, of which many members are Lutheran, as am, it was brought to my attention that the article "My Kitchen, My Gathering Place" promoted vegetarianism.

This type of publicity is damaging to the people out on the land who make their living from the livestock industry. We believe anyone chooses to not eat meat, it is their business; however we don't like to see them push their life-style onto others through God's Word.

*Evelyn Shafer  
Greives, Iowa*

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*Due to the volume of mail, LWT cannot reply to letters to the editor. Comments are appreciated, however, and may be addressed: Lutheran Woman Today Letters, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, 60631.*

## LWT STUDENT SUBSCRIPTION PROGRAM

ent subscriptions to LWT: a spe-  
way to support those congrega-  
daughters away at schools and  
ges; an opportunity to encour-  
the growth and faith of young  
men; and a means of saying  
"We're one of our own, we care about

udent subscribers will receive  
n issues of LWT, one each month  
November to May. Congrega-  
s, Women of the ELCA congrega-  
onal units, or sponsors wishing  
participate in the student sub-  
scription program are asked to sub-  
mit a subscription list, with payment  
\$100 per subscription), before Sep-  
tember 30, 1990. The LWT student  
subscription form will be printed in  
the July 1990 Women of the ELCA  
newsletter.

For more information contact  
LWT Circulation at 800-328-4648,  
extension 347.

## LWT *Honor Roll*

Honor Roll congregations are those  
in which all women of the parish re-  
ceive a subscription to LWT. Con-  
gratulations to these Honor Roll  
congregations:

Good Shepherd; Princeton,  
Minnesota  
Word of Life; North Pole, Alaska  
St. Luke; Foster, Wisconsin  
St. John's; Ryder, North Dakota  
St. Thel; Nashua, Montana  
St. Norwich; Norwich, North Dakota



## LWT GARNERS AWARDS

Lutheran Woman Today won recog-  
nition for its photography, promo-  
tion, and coverage at the conventions  
of the Religious Public Relations  
Council (RPRC) and the Associated  
Church Press in Nashville, Tennes-  
see, April 18-21. The June 1989 cov-  
er, "Affirming Individual Worth,"  
won the award of excellence in color  
photography in the RPRC DeRose/  
Hinkhouse awards. The poster, "Lu-  
theran Woman Today: Celebrating  
God's Creation" received a certificate  
of special merit from the RPRC. The  
Associated Church Press awarded  
an honorable mention to LWT for in-  
depth coverage of a current issue for  
the July 1989 issue on inclusivity.

## Prayer Petitions in Support of Namibia

**God of Freedom,** we give you thanks for leading the people of Namibia thus far toward the land of freedom. We pray for your guidance as they struggle through reconciliation, nation building and the economic and political roadblocks which remain on the journey to a just and peaceful independence.

We pray for God's children in Namibia, the saints who have died in the struggle for freedom, and those who today seek to be faithful to God's liberating word. May true justice and peace come soon.

**Gracious God,** you promise that dry bones will live, that exiles will be restored. And so we give you thanks for the return of over 40,000 exiles to Namibia. Sustain them with hope through the difficulties of beginning a new life. Comfort those who remain in separation, studying abroad in order to help build a new nation.

We pray for the congregations of the church in Namibia, for the people who have continued to worship and hope through years of suffering, even when services were disrupted and churches were surrounded by tanks and soldiers. We remember before you, Lord, the church leaders: Dumeni, Shejavali, Kameeta, Frederik, Kalluma, Witbooi and Haushiku. May they continue to hope in you.

**God of Justice,** may your name be honored in the coming of freedom in Namibia and to all your children imprisoned by poverty, racism, hatred and violence the world around. Start your reformation with us, O Christ. Cleanse our lives from greed. Raise us from apathy. By your Spirit, move us toward actions which will assist our government, churches and businesses to stand with and aid the struggle for freedom and justice in Namibia.

**God of the Poor,** in the cross of Jesus you gave up privilege and became our advocate—not only in word, but also in deed—by taking up the ministry of servanthood, even unto death. By your spirit empower each of us to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, advocates for our sisters and brothers in Namibia and all of southern Africa.

Reprinted from "Namibia Resources," used by permission of National Namibia Concerns (915 E. 9th Ave., Denver, CO 80218). While supplies last, single copies of "Namibia Resources" are available free by calling the Resource Information Service (800-638-3522).

# Mug Offer II: The Sequel

Support of Women of the ELCA's First Triennial Convention, LWT is renewing its mug offer until September 30, 1990. Introduce three friends to LWT and receive the "Celebrating God's Creation" mug as a thank you.



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(All credit card orders must be signed)

**Order form to: Lutheran Woman Today Circulation, P.O. Box 55440, Minneapolis, MN 55440.**



**“But let justice  
roll down like waters,  
and righteousness  
like an everflowing  
stream.”**

Amos 5:24

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